

Questions and Answers
on Essential Christian
Beliefs

The

ABC'S

of

Christian
Doctrine

BY D. SHELBY CORLETT

A B C's
of
Christian Doctrine

Questions and Answers
on Essential Christian
Beliefs

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ABC'S OF CHRISTIAN LIVING

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FOREWORD

In the preparation of these questions we have purposely followed the statements of belief printed in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene. The purpose of this book is to provide in simple form a study of the essentials of Christian doctrine with proof texts from the Scriptures. It is printed as a regular book publication of the Nazarene Publishing House which requested the Department of Church Schools to sponsor the project, select the writer and officially to authorize the material..

The booklet is suitable for use by study groups of young people or adults in local churches, for group discussion in young people's institutes, and as catechetical studies to be used by pastors preparing candidates for church membership.

D. S. C.

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WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

1. *What is Christianity?*

Christianity is the religion founded upon Jesus Christ, His teachings and atoning work, and promulgated by the universal brotherhood of believers, the Christian Church, bringing to all mankind the true revelation of God and of His redeeming love.

2. *What summarizes the Christian creed?*

The Apostle's Creed, namely: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: and in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic* Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Catholic in the sense of universal Church.

3. *What is the Christian's model prayer?*

The Lord's Prayer—Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen (Matthew 6: 9:13).

4. *What is the summary of the Christian moral law?*

- a. The Ten Commandments—I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the

Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything

that is thy neighbor's (Exodus 20: 3-17).

- b. And the commandments given by Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:30-31). "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34).

THE CHRISTIAN'S BOOK

5. *What is the sacred book of Christianity?*

The sacred book of Christianity is the Holy Bible, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments.

6. *How was the message of the Bible given?*

We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures by which we understand that the Bible was given by divine inspiration (Manual, page 26 [4]).

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:15, 16).

“For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:21).

7. *What do the Scriptures reveal?*

The Scriptures inerrantly reveal the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation; so that

whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith (Manual, page 26 [4]).

“. . . . the holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 3:15).

“Search the scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39).

“These were written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31).

8. *What general proof may be given for the divine inspiration of the Bible?*

The statements of the men of God that in their writings they were giving the word of God; its fulfilled prophecies; the recognized unexcelled moral quality and the inherent spiritual worth of the Bible; the completeness and unity of its redemptive message; and the fact that the Holy Spirit brings through it the message of light and power to all men today, provide a general proof of its divine inspiration.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have

made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (Exodus 34:27).

"And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2).

"The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

THE CHRISTIAN BELIEF IN GOD

9. *What is the Christian belief in God?*

We believe in one eternally existent, infinite God, Sovereign of the universe. That he only is God, creative and administrative, holy in nature, attributes, and purpose (Manual, page 25 [1]).

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord” (Deut. 6:4).

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2).

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 147:5).

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:3).

“Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (I Tim. 1:17).

10. *What is the nature of God?*

God is a Spirit, one God, Triune in essential being, revealed as Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit (Manual, page 25 [1], adapted).

“God is a Spirit” (John 4:24).

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19).

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen” (II Cor. 13:14).

11. *How may we know the existence of God?*

The existence of God is made known in His creative acts, in His providential care, in the revelation given of Him in the Holy Scriptures, and by the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

“For the visible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead” (Rom. 1:20).

“The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. . . . The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:9, 15, 16).

“ God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6).

12. *How is the Fatherhood of God revealed?*

His Fatherhood is revealed in His love and power, in His providential care over man and as the Giver of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared” (Titus 3:4).

“ . . . Your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:45).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

13. *How did the Son of God become man?*

The Son who was eternally one with the Father became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say the Godhead and manhood, are thus united in one person very God and very man, the God-man (Manual page 26 [2] adapted).

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:1, 14).

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5).

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matt. 1:23).

“And the angel answered and said unto her [Mary], The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

“For in him [Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

14. *What is the special work of the Son?*

He is the revelation of God and the Redeemer of the world. We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and that He truly rose from the dead and took again His body [now glorified], together with all things apper-

taining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven and is there engaged in intercession for us (Manual, page 26 [2] adapted).

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).

15. *What is the work of the Holy Spirit?*

The Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Triune Godhead is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus. (Manual, page 26 [3]).

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. . . . But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father

will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:16, 26).

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. . . . When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:8, 13, 14).

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5).

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth" (II Thess. 2:13).

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN

16. *What is the origin of man?*

God created man in His own image. He formed the body of man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into him the breath of life, making man a living soul.

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

“And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

17. *What is the moral responsibility of man?*

We believe that man's creation in godlikeness included ability to choose between right and wrong, and that thus he was made morally responsible. (Manual, page 27 [7]).

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and

multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

"And the Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16, 17).

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. 30:19).

18. *What is the duty of man?*

To fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 11:13).

19. *Did man continue in his original moral state?*

Man through disobedience of the law of God fell from his original moral state.

“And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (Genesis 3:12, 13).

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12).

20. *What was the result of the fall of man?*

Through the fall of Adam, man became depraved so that he cannot now [apart from the grace of God] turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God (Manual, page 27 [7]).

“The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Gen. 8:21).

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9).

“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2:14).

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:20).

21. *What is God's attitude toward fallen man?*

God loves man with the compassion of a heavenly Father and has through His Son Jesus Christ made possible a way of salvation for man.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17).

THE WAY OF SALVATION

22. *What is the ground of salvation?*

Jesus Christ, by His sufferings, by the shedding of His own blood, and by His meritorious death on the cross, made full atonement for all human sin, and this atonement is the only ground of salvation (Manual, page 27 [6]).

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. . . . For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Cor. 5:19, 21).

“Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit” (I Peter 3:18).

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (I Tim. 2:5, 6).

23. *Are all men included in the provisions of the atonement?*

The atonement is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race; the grace of God through Jesus Christ is freely bestowed upon all men, enabling all who will to turn from sin to righteousness, believe on Jesus Christ for pardon and cleansing from sin, and follow good works pleasing and acceptable in His sight. (Manual, page 27 [6, 7]).

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:12, 13).

"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (I John 2:2).

24. *What relation has the atonement to children and irresponsible persons?*

The atonement is graciously efficacious to the salvation of the irresponsible and to the children in innocency, but is efficacious to the salvation of those who reach the age of responsi-

bility only when they repent and believe (Manual, page 27-[6]).

“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Mark 10:14).

“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:3).

“We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe” (I Tim. 4:10).

25. *What is sin?*

Sin is the lack of conformity to, or the transgression of, the moral law of God.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23).

“All unrighteousness is sin” (I John 5:17).

“Sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4).

26. *What is original sin or depravity?*

Original sin, or depravity, is that corruption of the nature of all the offspring of Adam, by reason of which every one is very far gone

from original righteousness, or the pure state of our first parents at the time of their creation, is averse to God, is without spiritual life, and is inclined to evil, and that continually; and it continues to exist with the new life of the regenerate, until eradicated by the baptism with the Holy Spirit (Manual, page 27 [5]).

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12).

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalm 51:5).

“Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Rom. 7:17, 18).

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:17).

27. *What is salvation?*

Salvation means deliverance from sin. There is the present salvation or de-

liverance from the power of sin in regeneration, from the pollution of sin in entire sanctification, from the practice of sin in daily living; and a future salvation or deliverance from the environment of sin.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14).

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John 1:7).

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not” (I John 2:1).

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin” (I John 3:9).

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (I Peter 1:5).

28. *How may man be saved?*

Man may be saved only through repentance of sin and by believing on Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

29. *What is repentance?*

Repentance is a sincere and thorough change of the mind in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and a voluntary turning away from sin, and is demanded of all who have by act or purpose become sinners against God. The Spirit of God gives to all who will repent the gracious help of penitence of heart and hope of mercy, that they may believe unto pardon and spiritual life. (Manual, page 28 [8]).

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of” (II Cor. 7:10).

30. *What is saving faith?*

Saving faith is a hearty reliance upon God and His promise for salvation and a definite acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

31. *What is justification?*

Justification is that gracious and judicial act of God, by which He grants

full pardon of all guilt and complete release from the penalty of sins committed, and acceptance as righteous, to all who believingly receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. (Manual, page 28 [9]).

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

“That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:7).

32. *What is regeneration?*

Regeneration, or the new birth, is that gracious work of God, whereby the moral nature of the repentant believer is spiritually quickened and given a distinctively spiritual life, capable of faith, love, and obedience. (Manual, page 28 [10]).

“And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses” (Col. 3:9).

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he

shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3:5, 6).

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

33. *What is adoption?*

Adoption is that gracious act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer is constituted a son of God (Manual, page 29 [11]).

"That ye might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father" (Gal. 4:5, 6).

"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father" (Rom. 8:15).

34. *What is the witness of the Spirit?*

The witness of the Spirit is the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the spirit of believers of their sonship and acceptance with God.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

35. *What is the relation of these experiences to each other?*

Justification, regeneration, and adoption are simultaneous in the exper-

ience of seekers after God and are obtained upon the condition of faith, preceded by repentance; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness (Manual, page 29 [12]).

36. *What is entire sanctification?*

Entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect. (Manual, page 29 [13]).

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly” (I Thess. 5:23).

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Rom. 6:22).

37. *How is entire sanctification received?*

It is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness (Manual, page 29).

“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his

own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13:12).

". . . inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me [Christ]" (Acts 26:18).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

38. *What is the relation of entire sanctification to the baptism with the Holy Spirit?*

Entire sanctification is wrought by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service. (Manual, page 29).

"And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, 9).

"The offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sancti-

fied by the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 15: 16).

39. *By what other terms is the experience of entire sanctification known?*

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian Perfection," "Perfect Love," "Heart Purity," "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," "The Fullness of the Blessing," and "Christian Holiness" (Manual, page 29).

40. *What is the scriptural evidence of this experience?*

The evidence of the experience of entire sanctification, or the baptism with the Holy Spirit, is purity of heart and the free manifestation in daily life of the graces or fruit of the Spirit.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5: 8).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5: 22, 23).

41. *May a Christian fall from grace?*

We believe that man, though in the possession of the experience of regen-

eration and entire sanctification, may fall from grace and apostatize, and unless he repent of his sin, be hopelessly and eternally lost (Manual, page 28).

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (I Cor. 10:12).

“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginnings of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. 3:14).

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 6:4-6).

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

42. *What is the Church of God?*

The Church of God is composed of all spiritually regenerate persons, whose names are written in heaven (Manual, page 32 [21]).

“To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven” (Heb. 12:23).

“ . . . The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Eph. 3:14, 15).

43. *What is the nature of the Church of God?*

The Church of God is a spiritual organism into which all believers are incorporated by the Spirit; it is a holy temple in the Lord, an habitation of God through the Spirit.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body” (I Cor. 12:13).

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (I Cor. 12:27).

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the

household of God; and are built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

44. *What is the relation of the Church to Christ?*

The Church belongs to Christ; it is purchased by His blood, it is the spiritual body of which He is the head; it is also called the Bride of Christ.

"... the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

"... and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22, 23).

"I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor. 11:2).

45. *What is the mission of the Church?*

The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, the salt of the earth, and the light of the world; the medium

through which the gospel of Christ is proclaimed to the world.

“. . . . the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Tim. 3:15).

“Ye are the salt of the earth:
Ye are the light of the world. . . .

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:13, 14, 16).

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

46. *What are the churches severally?*

The churches severally are to be composed of such regenerate persons as by providential permission, and by the leadings of the Holy Spirit, become associated together for holy fellowship and ministries. (Manual, page 32 [22]).

“. . . . unto the church of God which is at Corinth” (II Cor. 1:1).

“. . . . to the church in thy house” (Philemon 2).

“Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write” (Rev. 2:1).

47. *What is the Church of the Nazarene?*

The Church of the Nazarene is composed of those persons who have voluntarily associated themselves together according to the doctrines and polity of said church, and who seek holy Christian fellowship, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of believers, their upbuilding in holiness, and the simplicity and spiritual power manifested in the primitive New Testament Church, together with the preaching of the gospel to every creature (Manual, page 32 [23]).

48. *What is a sacrament?*

A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

49. *What are the sacraments of the Church?*

The sacraments of the Church are the ordinances of Baptism and The Lord's Supper.

50. *What is Baptism?*

Christian baptism is a sacrament signifying acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ, to be administered to believers, as declarative of their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and full purpose of

obedience in holiness and righteousness (Manual, page 30 [18]).

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2: 38).

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” (Acts 10: 47).

“See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8: 36, 37).

51. *How may baptism be administered?*

Baptism is administered by water; by sprinkling, pouring or immersion, according to the choice of the applicant; in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Manual, adapted, page 31).

“. . . baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28: 19).

52. *What is The Lord's Supper?*

The Memorial and Communion Supper instituted by our Lord and Sav-

iour Jesus Christ, is essentially a New Testament sacrament, declarative of His sacrificial death, through the merits of which believers have life and salvation, and promise of all spiritual blessings in Christ (Manual, page 31 [14]).

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread” (I Cor. 10:16, 17).

53. *What are the emblems of this sacrament?*

The broken bread and unfermented wine are the sacramental emblems of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ.

“... Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26: 26-28).

54. *Who are to partake of The Lord's Supper?*

It is distinctly for those who are prepared for reverent appreciation of its significance, and by it they show forth the Lord's death till He come again. Being the communion feast, only those who have faith in Christ and love for the saints should be called to participate therein. (Manual, page 31 [19]).

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body” (I Cor. 11: 26-29).

55. *What are other institutions of Christianity?*

The Christian Sabbath and Marriage are other institutions of Christianity.

56. *What is the Sabbath?*

The Sabbath is the seventh day, a sacred day of rest, following six days

of secular employment. The Sabbath principle was revealed by God at the time of creation and is confirmed in the Ten Commandments.

“And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made” (Gen. 2:3).

“Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God” (Exod. 20:8-10).

57. *What was the Jewish Sabbath?*

The Jewish Sabbath was the sabbath principle adapted by God as a weekly memorial of God's perpetual covenant with Israel and of their deliverance from Egypt. As such it was a shadow of things to come which Christ took out of the way in His death.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever” (Exod. 31:16, 17).

“Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath com-

manded thee. . . . And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God comanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5:12, 15).

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:14-17).

58. *What is the Christian Sabbath?*

It is the sabbath principle adapted by the Christian Church to the first day of the week as a weekly memorial of the resurrection of our Lord and of the advent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, . . . came Jesus and stood in the midst,

and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. . . . After eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas was with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you" (John 20:19, 26).

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts 20:7).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2).

59. *How are we to keep the Sabbath day holy?*

We keep the Sabbath day holy by devoting the day chiefly to the worship and service of God, and by refraining from all secular occupations and recreations, except works of mercy and necessity.

60. *Is marriage a divine institution?*

The institution of marriage was ordained of God in the time of man's innocence, and is, according to apostolic authority, "honorable in all"; it is the mutual union of one man and one

woman for fellowship, helpfulness and the propagation of the race (Manual, page 46 [37]).

“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh” (Matt. 19: 4-6).

“Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled” (Heb. 13:4).

61. *Is the marriage covenant binding?*

The marriage covenant is morally binding as long as both shall live, and, therefore, may not be dissolved at will (Manual, page 47 [37]).

“What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder” (Mark 10:9).

“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband” (Rom. 7:2).

62. *Is divorce and remarriage ever allowable?*

There may exist such causes and conditions as justify divorce under civil

law, yet only adultery will supply such ground as may justify the innocent party in remarrying. (Manual, page 47 [38]).

“And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 19:9).

63. *What is the church's teaching on divine healing?*

We believe in the Bible doctrine of divine healing and urge our people to seek to offer the prayer of faith for the healing of the sick. Providential means and agencies when deemed necessary should not be refused (Manual, page 31 [20]).

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let him pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:14, 15).

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

64. *What is the standard of Christian living?*

The standard for Christian living is the moral law revealed in the Holy Scriptures; hence Christians are to live upright, sober and godly lives, ever seeking to glorify God in all phases of life.

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:4).

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12).

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (I Cor. 10:31).

65. *How may the Christian glorify God in his body?*

The Christian may glorify God in his body by realizing constantly that his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, by devoting his whole life to the doing of the will of God, and by refraining from such practices, habits, adornments and associations as are not to

the glory of God. (See Manual, General Rules, pages 33 to 36).

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

“Abstain from all appearance of evil” (I Thess. 5:22).

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (I Peter 3:3, 4).

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. 6:14, 17, 18).

66. *What are the obligations for Christian growth?*

Our people should give careful heed to the development of holiness in the fear of the Lord, and to the development of the Christian graces in the heart and of their manifestation in daily life (Manual, page 48 [40]).

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Peter 3:18).

67. *What are the means for Christian growth?*

The means of Christian growth are faithful attendance upon the fellowship of public worship, the consistent practice of devotional exercises, such as the reading and study of the Word, private prayer and spiritual meditation, and personal activity in Christian service.

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (Heb. 10:24, 25).

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (I Peter 2:2).

“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy

door, pray to thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:6).

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting [progress, R. V.] may appear to all" (I Tim. 4:15).

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8).

68. *What is the place of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's life?*

The Holy Spirit is the source of all Christian life and growth; the Inspirer of all Christian virtues; the Helper in the development of character, giving power for service, help in the prayer life, comfort in sorrow, and strength in trials; His presence and sealing is the constant assurance of present salvation and the confidence of eternal life.

"The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:2).

"The fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22).

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter [Helper]" (John 14:16).

". . . . the Spirit, maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27).

“After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1: 13, 14)

69. *What is Christian Stewardship?*

Christian stewardship is the recognition of God’s ownership of all things and of man’s trusteeship—that we are but stewards of our own lives and in the use of our time, means, and other possessions; and that we are under the sacred obligation of systematic and proportionate giving of our time and means for the support of Christian work, and of holding and using all possessions sacredly unto the Lord. (Manual, page 48 [41]).

“. . . . the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth” (Gen. 14: 19).

“. . . . He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things” (Acts 17: 25).

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (I Peter 4: 10).

“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (I Cor. 4: 2).

“Honour the Lord with thy sub-

stance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase" (Prov. 3:9).

70. *What is the Christian's obligation in the support of the church?*

It is the Christian's duty to contribute to the support of the church according to the ability which God gives. We believe that the scriptural method of gathering money for the support of the church is by means of tithes and offerings (Manual, page 45 [33]).

"Even so the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (I Cor. 16:2).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house" (Mal. 3:10).

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

71. *What is the Christian's relation to the world?*

The Christian is not of the world, but being a member of human society he

is not indifferent to his relation to others; especially does he seek to do good to all men, to seek the salvation of sinners and the reformation of society.

“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil” (John 17:14, 15).

“God . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:24, 25).

“Let us do good unto all men” (Gal. 6:10).

72. *What summarizes the Christian's obligation to others?*

The second great commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” summarizes the Christian's obligation to others; which means that we are to “love all men with the love of good will, the unfortunate and distressed with the love of pity, and good men with the love of complacency” (*Christian Theology*, WILEY).

73. *What are the Christian's obligations to civil authorities?*

It is the Christian's obligation to show respect to and pray for the civil

authorities, to be a law-abiding citizen, and to exercise his privileges as a citizen in the affairs of government.

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. . . . Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king” (I Peter 2:13-15, 17).

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (I Tim. 2: 1, 2).

“Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21).

74. *What is a Christian home?*

A Christian home is a home where God is worshiped and honored, and

where Christian love is the guiding principle in all relationships.

“Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband” (Eph. 5:33).

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:1, 4).

CHRISTIANITY AND THE FUTURE

75. *What is the kingdom of God?*

The kingdom of God is a present possession and a future hope; it is the present rule of Christ over His people through the indwelling Holy Spirit, but its full consummation awaits the final rule of Christ, when He "shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father . . . that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:24-28).

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20, 21).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17).

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

76. *What do we believe about the second coming of Christ?*

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again; that we who are alive at His coming shall not precede them

that are asleep in Christ Jesus; but that, if we are abiding in Him, we shall be caught up with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, so that we shall ever be with the Lord (Manual, page 30 [14]).

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thess. 4:15-17).

77. *What is the Christian view of death?*

“Death for the Christian is the door through which he enters into the new life, he receives in the resurrection which follows, a new and glorified body as the eternal habitation of his redeemed soul” (*Christian Theology*, WILEY).

“Death is swallowed up in victory”
(I Cor. 15:54).

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (II Cor. 5: 1).

“We are confident, I say, and willing, rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (II Cor. 5:8).

78. *What is the meaning of resurrection?*

In the resurrection of the dead, the bodies of both the just and the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits (Manual, page 30 [15]).

“Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28, 29).

79. *What is glorification?*

Glorification is the completion of man's salvation, when Christ shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:20, 21).

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (I Cor. 15:51-53).

80. *What is the Christian teaching of future judgment?*

We believe in future judgment in which every man shall appear before God to be judged according to the deeds done in this life (Manual, page 30 [16]).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath

done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10).

81. *What is the future destiny of mankind?*

We believe that a glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who savingly believe in, and obediently follow, Jesus Christ our Lord; and that the finally impenitent shall suffer eternally in hell (Manual, page 30 [17]).

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

82. *What is heaven?*

Heaven is the dwelling place of God and of the holy angels, and the eternal home of the redeemed of this earth.

"In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:10).

"To an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (I Peter 1:4).

83. *What is hell?*

Hell is the dwelling place of evil spirits, the place prepared for the

devil and his angels, and the eternal abode of the finally impenitent sinner.

“If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell” (II Peter 2:4).

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41).

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9:17).

84. *What is the final consummation of all things?*

The final consummation of all things will be the full victory of Jesus Christ over all evil, the glorious completion of the kingdom of God in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; and the complete rule of God and righteousness in His universe.

“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he shall reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (I Cor. 15:24, 25).

“Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. 3:13).

“Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth” (Rev. 19:6).