

**Introduction:**

**I. WHAT IS THIS AUTHORITY? IN GENERAL**

- A. IN THE \_\_\_\_\_ vv. 18-19; 18:17-18
- B. UNDER THE \_\_\_\_\_ v. 17, 23; 28:18f (Rev. 1:18; 3:7-8; 20:1-2)
- C. BEYOND \_\_\_\_\_ Acts 1:15f; 2:14; 8:14; 10:5; 15:7f (Mt. 18:18)
- D. FROM \_\_\_\_\_ v. 19b

**II. WHAT ARE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM? IN PARTICULAR**

- A. THE KEY OF \_\_\_\_\_ Jn. 8:32; 2Tim. 3:5-7
1. Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Lk. 11:52; 13:23-29; 24:32, 44-47
2. Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. 5:19; 23:4 (Col. 2:20f; Rom. 6:17)
3. Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. 7:21f; 1Cor. 6:9f; Gal. 5:18f; Eph. 5:7f
- B. THE KEY OF \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. 18:15-20; Jn. 20:22-23
1. \_\_\_\_\_ the Magician Acts 8:18-23
2. \_\_\_\_\_ in Corinth 1Cor. 5:1-5; 2Cor. 2:6-8
3. \_\_\_\_\_ in Asia Minor 3Jn. 9-10

**III. WHO POSSESSES THESE KEYS TODAY?**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ hold the key of \_\_\_\_\_ 1Tim. 5:19; 4:14
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ hold the key of \_\_\_\_\_ Acts 15:6; Tit. 1:5f

**IV. WHAT SHOULD BE OUR RESPONSE?**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ v. 19; 1Thes. 2:13; 2Cor. 5:20f (Acts 2:47; 5:11f)
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ 2Cor. 10:8; 12:19; 13:10
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ Col. 4:3-4; 2Thes. 3:1; Heb. 13:17-18

**Larger Catechism (Question 45)**

**Q.** How doth Christ execute the office of a king? **A.** Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws, and censures, by which he visibly governs them...

**Confession of Faith (Chapter 30 – “Of Church Censures”)**

1. The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed government, in the hand of Church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.
2. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof, they have power, respectively, to retain, and remit sins; to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the Word, and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel; and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.
3. Church censures are necessary, for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring of others from the like offences, for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honour of Christ, and the holy profession of the Gospel, and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer His covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.
4. For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the Church are to proceed by admonition; suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season; and by excommunication from the Church; according to the nature of the crime, and demerit of the person.

**Heidelberg Catechism (Questions 83-85)**

**Q.** What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven? **A.** The preaching of the holy gospel, and Christian discipline, or excommunication out of the Christian church; by these two, the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers, and shut against unbelievers.

**Q.** How is the kingdom of heaven opened and shut by the preaching of the holy gospel? **A.** When according to the command of Christ, it is declared and publicly testified to all and every believer, that, whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgiven them of God, for the sake of Christ's merits; and on the contrary, when it is declared and testified to all unbelievers, and such as do not sincerely repent, that they stand exposed to the wrath of God, and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted: according to which testimony of the gospel, God will judge them, both in this, and in the life to come.

**Q.** How is the kingdom of heaven shut and opened by Christian discipline? **A.** Thus: when according to the command of Christ, those, who under the name of Christians, maintain doctrines, or practices inconsistent therewith, and will not, after having been often brotherly admonished, renounce their errors and wicked course of life, are complained of to the church, or to those, who are thereunto appointed by the church; and if they despise their admonition, are by them forbidden the use of the sacraments; whereby they are excluded from the Christian church, and by God himself from the kingdom of Christ; and when they promise and show real amendment, are again received as members of Christ and his church.