

## 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 # 93.

*(Larger Catechism)*

Q #93. *What is the moral law?*

A. The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding every one to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body,<sup>1</sup> and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he oweth to God and man:<sup>2</sup> promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.<sup>3</sup>

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Question 1—*Is the moral law the declaration of the will of God to mankind?*

*Answer*—Yes. Whereas, God's will of decree cannot be resisted and is always fulfilled, Rom. 9:19; the will of God's precept is often violated by men, Matt. 23:37. The moral law we understand as declaring the perceptive will of God to mankind. This is a declaration of what it is that God would have all men to do to be upright, or holy, Ps. 143:10.

As to its precept the moral law falls under the decree of God, Luke 11:2. Nonetheless, though God wills the precept in the decree; he can, nevertheless, withhold the effecting of it. For example, in the case of Pharaoh, God, by declaring his will of precept (the moral law) commanded the release of his people, Ex. 5:1; 7:2. However, by his will of decree, God nilled what, by precept, he willed, Ex. 4:21; 7:3.

Question 2—*Does it direct and bind everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience to the will of God?*

*Answer*—Yes. Deut. 5:1-3, 31, 33. It is directed and binds everyone, Ps. 111:7, 8. And that in three ways: 1.) Personally. It must be performed by each and every individual not, as the Papists and others, suggest by proxy, Matt. 19:18, 19. Indeed, not even what Christ performed on our behalf exempts us from yielding perfect obedience, 1 Cor. 9:21; Jas. 4:11. 2.) Perfectly. The same obligation that man was under prior to the Fall remains in full force, Jas. 2:10. Our native inability does not disannul the obligation, Matt. 5:48. In fact, however much God may own and approve the sincerity of his people, Rom. 4:5; yet, we must not suppose that this is a fulfilling of the obligation under which man is placed, 1 Sam. 15:22; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16. 3.) Perpetually. There must be no backsliding from God, or remissness in our duty toward him, Jer. 14:7. There is no allowance for the least defect in this obedience, Ps. 119:93; 145:2.

Question 3—*Does the moral law bind the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body?*

*Answer*—Yes. Luke 10:26, 27; 1 Thess. 5:23. The personal, perfect and perpetual is to characterize both our conformity (*i.e.*, the inward framing of the soul) and obedience

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<sup>1</sup> Deut. 5:1-3, 31, 33; Luke 10:26-27; 1 Thess. 5:23.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 1:75; Acts 24:16.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:10, 12.

(i.e., the outward framing of the body)—the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body.

The soul ought to, with all diligence and intensity, be moved to obey in all its faculties and powers. 1.) The understanding is to be rightly instructed in the matter and manner of the required obedience, Prov. 15:32; Luke 24:45; Eph. 5:17. 2.) The will needs to be made subject to the will of God, Eph. 6:6; Heb. 10:36. 3.) The affections need to be engaged so that the duty is performed with delight according to the love we ought to bear to God, 1 Chron. 29:3; Gal. 5:24; Col. 3:2.

As the former pertains to the inward frame, so the outward frame, or body, must be disposed to obedience. Though it is true that this constitutes the lower form of obedience, 1 Tim. 4:8; yet, it does require attention since the body is the instrument which the soul employs to act, cf. 2 Cor. 12:2, 3, *with* Rom. 6:12. Therefore, the service performed therein is absolutely necessary, Rom. 12:1. All religious worship is to be engaged in with a becoming reverence that is external as well as internal, 1 Cor. 14:40. Without the body the soul cannot be said to be engaged in any religious duties in a becoming manner, 1 Cor. 6:20.

Question 4—*Is the performance of these duties of holiness and righteousness what each man owes to God and man?*

*Answer*—Yes. Luke 1:75; Acts 24:16. The former is owed by the creature to the Creator, Rom. 1:25. This is due by reason of both the divine nature, 1 Pet. 1:16; and, of the divine will, 1 Pet. 4:19. The later, is owed to fellow creatures by reason both of the divine will, Lev. 19:10-18; and, the nature of the created order, Gen. 9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7.

The former respects especially our duty to God, which, since it is a branch of religious worship, ought to be performed with reverential fear to the divine Majesty, Ps. 96:9. Men should always have respect to God's infinite purity, Job 4:17; 25:5. This requires an entire dedication and consecration of ourselves to him, as becomes those sanctified by his Spirit, Ex. 32:29; Rom. 15:16.

The later respects especially our duties we owe to men, Rom. 12:17, 18. It is shaped by the relations in which we stand to them, Rom. 13:7, 8. It is incumbent on us as what is enjoined by God, 1 John 2:29; 3:7.

Question 5—*Does the moral law promise life upon the fulfilling, and threaten death upon its breach?*

*Answer*—Yes. Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:10, 12. There is annexed to the moral law sanction. A law without sanction is not much regarded, especially by those without a due sense of their obligation to obedience, Eccl. 8:11; Ps. 10:6. Persons are very much disposed to ask, when laws are given, what will be the consequences for either obeying or disobeying, Ps. 10:13; Deut. 29:19. This adds a strong motive to obedience, Deut. 11:26-28. But God, out of his abundant grace, is pleased to add blessings to encourage those that put their trust in him, Prov. 10:22. In this way, believers are led to delight in the law of God after the inner man, Ps. 119:174; Rom. 7:22.