

## 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 # 174.

*(Larger Catechism)*

Q #174. *What is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper in the time of the administration of it?*

A. It is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, that, during the time of the administration of it, with all holy reverence and attention they wait upon God in that ordinance,<sup>1</sup> diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions,<sup>2</sup> heedfully discern the Lord's body,<sup>3</sup> and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings,<sup>4</sup> and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces;<sup>5</sup> in judging themselves,<sup>6</sup> and sorrowing for sin;<sup>7</sup> in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ,<sup>8</sup> feeding on him by faith,<sup>9</sup> receiving of his fullness,<sup>10</sup> trusting in his merits,<sup>11</sup> rejoicing in his love,<sup>12</sup> giving thanks for his grace;<sup>13</sup> in renewing of their covenant with God,<sup>14</sup> and love to all the saints.<sup>15</sup>

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Question 1—*What is the frame of spirit in which we are to engage in the partaking of the Lord's supper?*

*Answer*—There is in this ordinance a duty, common to all the ordinances of the Lord, to wait on God with all holy reverence arising from a becoming sense of his divine perfections, Lev. 10:3; as well as the infinite distance we stand from him, Ps. 5:7. Because he knows better than we do ourselves the frame of spirit in which we ought to make this approach, our souls ought to be impressed with a grave sense of his omniscience and omnipresence, Heb. 12:28. He highly resents all that is contrary to his holiness, or unbecoming the character of those who are worshipping at his footstool, 1 Chron. 28:2; Ps. 132:7. Thus, it is an offense against the majesty of God and the reverence due his name to gather in any way unruly or disorderly for the purpose of

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<sup>1</sup> Lev. 10:3; Heb. 12:28; Ps. 5:7; 1 Cor. 11:17, 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. 24:8; Matt. 26:28.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. 11:29.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 22:19.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 11:26; 10:3-5, 11, 14.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. 11:31.

<sup>7</sup> Zech. 12:10.

<sup>8</sup> Rev. 22:17.

<sup>9</sup> John 6:35.

<sup>10</sup> John 1:16.

<sup>11</sup> Phil. 3:9.

<sup>12</sup> Ps. 53:4, 5; 2 Chron. 30:21.

<sup>13</sup> Ps. 22:26.

<sup>14</sup> Jer. 50:5; Ps. 50:5.

<sup>15</sup> Acts 2:42.

celebrating this ordinance, 1 Cor. 11:17. Nor will he account those guiltless who attempt to do so, 1 Cor. 11:26, 27.

Question 2—*What things peculiar to this ordinance are necessary in order to partaking in a right manner?*

*Answer—First*, we are diligently to observe both the sacramental elements and actions, Ex. 24:8. The bread and the wine, together with the actions to be performed in our receiving them by Christ's appointment, are significant and instructive signs of his death, and of the benefits purchased by his death, which are to be brought to our remembrance in this ordinance, Matt. 26:28.

*Second*, there is to be a heedful discerning of the Lord's body in this sacrament, 1 Cor. 11:29. The blessings of the covenant of grace are signified and sealed by these elements and actions as instituted, not as natural signs, but as visible emblems of that gospel account of what Christ did and suffered for his people, Matt. 26:26.

*Third*, we must affectionately meditate upon the sufferings and death of Christ, which are signified in this ordinance, Luke 22:19. We should consider the condescending love in giving his life a ransom for us, Mark 10:45. Meditating upon the excellency and glory of the divine Person who has added infinite value to every part of his obedience and suffering, Heb. 5:8. We must consider the death he died, being wounded, bruised and cut off, Isa. 53:5; Dan. 9:26; and in all bearing the external mark of the curse of God, being made a curse for us, Gal. 3:13. This death he died for those who were without strength or ability to do good, even ungodly sinners, who are in the character of open enemies to him, Rom. 5:6, 8, 10.

Question 3—*What ought to be stirred up at the time of partaking of the Lord's supper?*

*Answer—*In this ordinance, it is required that we stir ourselves up to a vigorous exercise of those graces pertaining to the nature of this sacramental observance, 1 Cor. 11:26. This has been the practice of the people of God under the Old Testament administration and it is to continue under the New, 1 Cor. 10:3-5, 11, 14. Accordingly, we are to enter into judgment with ourselves, 1 Cor. 11:31. This we do in order to acknowledge our debt to Christ who has redeemed us by his blood, Ps. 130:3. We are, at the same time, to be duly affected for our sin bewailing and lamenting the corruption of our nature and the actual sins proceeding therefrom, Zech. 12:10. This sorrow ought to produce good effects of praying and striving against sin, as well as endeavoring to return to God from whom we have backslidden, 2 Cor. 7:11.

Additionally, we are to hunger and thirst after Christ with ardent desire of holding communion with him, Rev. 22:17. This desire arises from a deep sense of our need of Christ, and of farther supplies of grace from him, Isa. 26:9; Ps. 42:1. Then, having communion with Christ, we are to feed on him by faith, John 6:35. Whereby the gospel dispensation is set forth under the metaphor of a feast, Isa. 25:6; as Christ himself also relates, Matt. 22:4. Thus doing we are to receive of his fullness, John 1:16.

Again, we are to trust in the merits of Christ, exercising an entire confidence in him, Phil. 3:9. In so doing, we retain a humble sense of our own unworthiness, Gen. 32:10; laying the whole stress of our salvation upon him, Heb. 7:25.

Question 4—*What ought to accompany this stirring up of grace?*

*Answer—*All of this ought to be accompanied with a rejoicing in the love of Christ, John 13:1. Through this love, his people overcome his and their enemies, Ps. 53:4, 5; whilst finding gladness in his salvation, 2 Chron. 30:21. This is a love which does not take its

motive or rise from any beauty or excellency which he finds in them, but from that which he has put in them, Ezek. 16:14. It is a love all condescending, in part arising from his remembrance of the low estate of his people, wherein he had compassion on them whom no eye pitied, Ezek. 16:6. It is a love not content with general endeavors to do good, like that of strangers, but is attended with the highest acts of friendship and communion, John 14:21. It is even the intimate love of close friendship, John 15:15.

It ought also to be accompanied with thankfulness because he was pleased to extend compassion to us in bestowing upon us the blessings of his discriminating grace, Ps. 22:26. He has delivered us from the ruin which sin would inevitably bring upon us, Isa. 1:28; bestowing upon us the blessings of goodness by renewing our nature, changing our heart, and creating us unto good works, Eph. 2:8-10.

Furthermore, at the Lord's supper, we are to renew our covenant with God, Ps. 50:5. This is not a matter of us promising that we will do those things which are out of our power, 2 Tim. 1:9; or that we will exercise those graces which none but God, who works in his people to will and do, can enable us to put forth, Phil. 2:13; but in making a continual surrender of ourselves to Christ, depending upon him for all our spiritual wants, Rom. 12:1, 2. Moreover, to renew covenant is to declare that, through his grace, we are inclined steadfastly to adhere to that covenant, Jer. 50:5.

Lastly, all should be accompanied with a readiness to exercise Christian love to all the saints of God, Acts 2:42. We are to consider that all saints are members of Christ's mystical body, children of the same Father, and partakers of the same grace, 1 Cor. 12:12, 13.