

A
CATECHISM
FOR
CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS

“The father to the children shall make known the truth.”
(Isa. 38:19.)

BY
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This printing is taken from *The Things most surely believed among us* (The Gospel Standard Strict Baptist Societies, 1995). It has been checked against the eighth edition of *A Catechism for Children and Schools by William Gadsby* (J. Gadsby, 1888), and the text as given in Volume II of *The Works of the Late William Gadsby, Manchester* (J. Gadsby, 1851). No copies of the first edition, dated 1809, are known to exist. The 1995 edition is thought to be the first to provide Scripture references, and we do not know the source of them. In this printing we have restored Gadsby's original preface which was omitted from the 1995 edition.

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Preface

I do not profess to have published a catechism entirely new, as part of it is taken from the *Baptist Catechism*; with a few alterations. What induced me to publish the following was, that most of the catechisms extant contained some things, as I thought, not according to the Scriptures, and what truths they do contain are stated in such a way as to lead the child to believe itself interested in all the blessings thereof. For example:

Q. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby *we* are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God. (*Baptist Catechism*, Q. 87.)

Here the child is taught to consider itself a child of God, and to have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God; therefore, is nursed up in a false confidence.

A catechism has lately fallen into my hands, in which a question is proposed that quite surprised me; nor could I have believed that the author would have let

such an expression fall from his lips, much less have published it. The question is:

What do you learn from God's inflicting so heavy a punishment on our first parents for so small a crime?

Is not this calculated to make the child think that God is a tyrant? If our first parents' crime was not a great one, what is a great one? For they had no sinful nature to induce them to disobey God's commands; whereas, all men descended from them are made partakers of their fallen nature, and every sin committed now is a bad fruit of a bad tree—is the putting forth into action what our first parents so freely let in; so their first sin has brought all the miseries into the world which it had ever endured, as it is the root from whence all evils spring; so that to call it as small crime is awful indeed!

In the following catechism, I have endeavoured to state the truths in such a way as to lead the child to take sin to itself, and not to suppose that the blessings of free grace belong to it, unless it has an evidence of being born again.

That the great Head of the church may bless the truths it contains to those who need them, is the prayer of, dear reader,

Yours to serve in the Gospel of Christ,

W. Gadsby



William Gadsby (1773-1844)

A CATECHISM

Question 1. Who is the only self-existent Being?

Answer. God is the only self-existent Being.

(Ex. 3:14; Psa. 90:2; Isa. 45:5, 22; Jn. 8:58.)

Question 2. Ought everyone to believe that there is a God?

Answer. Everyone ought to believe that there is a God, and it is their great sin and folly who do not.

(Psa. 9:17; Ecc. 12:13; Mark 16:16; Jn. 8:4 & 16:8-9; 2 Thess. 2:11-12.)

Question 3. How may we know that there is a God?

Answer. The works of creation and providence plainly declare that there is a God, but his Word and Spirit only do it effectually to the salvation of his people.

(Job chapters 38 & 39; Psa. 19; Jn. 16:8-14 & 17:8; 1 Cor. 2:10.)

Question 4. What is the Word of God?

Answer. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and obedience.

(Psa. 119:140; Prov. 30:5; Isa. 40:8; 2 Tim. 3:14-17.)

Question 5. What things are chiefly contained in the Holy Scriptures?

Answer. The Holy Scriptures chiefly contain what man is to believe concerning God, and what God requires of man.

(Ecc. 12:13-14; Mic. 6:8; 2 Tim. 3:14-17.)

Question 6. What is God?

Answer. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

(Ex. 34:5-7; Jn. 4:24; 1 Tim. 1:17 & 6:15-16; Heb. 12:29; Rev. 22:13.)

Question 7. Are there more Gods than one?

Answer. There is but one only living and true God.

(Deut. 6:4; Isa. 45:5-6, 21-22; 1 Tim. 2:5.)