

# Westminster Shorter Catechism for kids

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Workbook One: Who is God?  
Questions 1 – 10

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Solutions Manual

*Catechism for Kids*

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All Bible verses quoted in this workbook are in the New International (NIV) translation.

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**Fill in the blanks.**

**What is your main purpose?**

My main purpose is to glorify God

and to enjoy him forever.

**How long will you enjoy God?**

I will enjoy God forever.

**Psalm 73:25-26** Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

In this psalm, the songwriter says that he knows God is with him always, even when he feels weak and afraid. We can see that the psalmist loves and enjoys God. He says that the whole earth has nothing he wants besides God.



## Let's Think!

Can you think of any other Bible verse which speaks about glorifying or enjoying God? Which one do you remember?

Answers may vary. Examples: Psalm 19:1, Mark 9:2-7

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How do you glorify God at home?

Answers may vary.

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How do you glorify God at church?

Answers may vary.

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How do you glorify God while doing your chores?

Answers may vary.

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How do you glorify God while playing with your friends?

Answers may vary.

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Draw a picture of something you do that glorifies God:

down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.



## Let's Think!

Was it wrong for the rich man to build a bigger barn? No

Who made the rich man? God

Who gave the rich man his crops? God

Who decided when the rich man would die? God

Was the rich man thinking about God? No

Why did God call the rich man a fool? He stored up for

himself, but he did not honor God.

**Who wrote the Bible?** The Bible was written by holy men who were instructed by the Holy Spirit. They wrote as the Holy Spirit taught them.

**Why does the catechism say 'hath'?** 'Hath' is an old-fashioned way of saying 'has.' The question could be said like this: *What rule has God given to teach us how to glorify and enjoy him?*



**Fill in the blanks.**

Can we do whatever we want and say that we are glorifying God?

No, we cannot.

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What did God give us to teach us how to glorify and enjoy him?

God gave us the Bible to teach us.

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We call the Bible the 'Word of God.' What else do we call it?

Scripture

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## Let's Think!

Who wrote the Bible? Holy men who wrote as the Holy

Spirit taught them (the apostles and prophets)

Who were some of the holy men who wrote as the Holy Spirit taught them?

The apostles and prophets (Moses, David,

Isaiah, John, Paul, etc)

How did John know that the things he said about Jesus were true?

He saw and heard them himself.

What makes the Bible more special than other books?

The Bible is the Word of God.



**Fill in the blank.**

How many books are in the Old Testament? 39

How many books are in the New Testament? 27

What are the four main parts of the Old Testament?

1. Pentateuch (Books of Moses)

2. Historical Books

3. Devotional Books

4. Prophets

Most epistles in the New Testament were written by Paul.



**Fill in the blanks.**

The Scriptures mostly teach what we should believe  
about God and what duty God requires of us.

The Scriptures include both the old Testament and  
the New Testament.

**Draw a picture of something that is your duty:**

## Lesson 2

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Q. 3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. The \_\_\_\_\_ principally \_\_\_\_\_ what man is to \_\_\_\_\_ concerning God, and what duty God requires of \_\_\_\_\_.



### Let's Think!

Do you remember the Ten Commandments? (If you do not remember them, you can read them in Exodus 20:1-17).

List the Ten Commandments:

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
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2. You shall make no graven images.

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3. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.

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4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

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5. Honor your father and mother.

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6. You shall not kill.

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7. You shall not commit adultery.

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8. You shall not steal.

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9. You shall not bear false witness.

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10. You shall not covet.

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Although it is very important, this part of the catechism can be a little difficult to understand. Let's take it one piece at a time:

**What does 'infinite' mean?** 'Infinite' means something is so big that there is no end to it.

**What does 'eternal' mean?** 'Eternal' means something always existed and will always exist.

**What does 'unchangeable' mean?** 'Unchangeable' means something cannot be changed.

The Shorter Catechism applies each of these characteristics to the attributes of God (see chart on page 38). Everything in God's nature is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. God's **being** is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. His **wisdom** is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. His **power** is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. We could go on to say the same about each of God's attributes.



## Let's Think!

If you are afraid, what can you remember about God's attributes?

God is with you always. He has infinite being.

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When people do bad things, they often imagine that God will not do anything to punish them. What should they remember about God's attributes?

God is eternally and unchangeably just.

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

**Job 11:7** Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?

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

**Psalms 90:2** Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

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

**James 1:17** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

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

**Exodus 3:14** God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his

being \_\_\_\_\_, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

**Psalm 147:5** Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being,

wisdom \_\_\_\_\_, power \_\_\_\_\_, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

**Isaiah 6:1-3** In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: with two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory."

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness \_\_\_\_\_, justice, goodness, and truth.

**Exodus 34:5-7** Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the

compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness,  
and truth.

**Numbers 23:19** God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?

God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.



cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.



## Let's Think!

According to the psalm, who makes idols? humans

Do the eyes, ears, and mouth of an idol have any use? no

Is the idol able to do anything? no

How are idols different from the real God? God is real.

He is powerful. He is able to do whatever he wants.

Some Christians are afraid to see a picture of an idol because they worry that it might hurt them. Will looking at an idol hurt them?

No

Why should we never be afraid of an idol? An idol

has no powers. It is not a real god.

Should we ever worship an idol? Why or why not?

No, God has commanded that we only worship him.

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He is the true and living God.

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God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.”

Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The LORD—he is God! The LORD—he is God!”



## Let's Think!

Do you think the prophets of Baal really thought Baal was a god? Why or why not?

Yes, because they called on Baal all day. They

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even cut themselves to get Baal's attention.

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Why did Elijah pour water on the altar?

To show that only God could set fire to it.

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Did Elijah have to do anything crazy like shout or cut himself so that God would hear him?

No, Elijah merely prayed simply and quietly.

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God heard him.

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Why did Elijah have victory over the prophets of Baal?

Only God is the living and true God. Baal had

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no power because he was not a real god.

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The Sh'ma is pronounced like this:

*Sh'ma Yishrael: Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad*

Throughout generations, God reminded his people again and again that there is only one God. The Israelites kept wandering away to worship other gods, which are not really gods at all. The prophet Jeremiah warned God's people:

**Jeremiah 10:14-16** Everyone is senseless and without knowledge; every goldsmith is shamed by his idols. The images he makes are a fraud; they have no breath in them. They are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these, for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the people of his inheritance— the LORD Almighty is his name.



## Let's Think!

What warning did Jeremiah give to God's people about the images they were making?

The idols were worthless and could not protect

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them.

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How is the true God different from an image made by a goldsmith?

God is the Maker of all things.

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Look up the Sh'ma (Deuteronomy 6:4) in your Bible. What is the next verse (Deuteronomy 6:5)?

Love the Lord your God with all your heart

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and with all your soul and with all your strength.

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Deuteronomy 6:5 is quoted in the New Testament. Who quoted it?

Jesus (Matt. 22:37, Mark 12:30, Luke 10:27)

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was incarnate, and was made man,  
suffered and rose again the third day,  
ascended into heaven,  
and cometh to judge the living and the dead.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit.

Those who say:

*There was a time when he was not,  
and he was not before he was made;  
and that he was made out of nothing;  
or who maintain that he is of another substance*

*or essence than the Father,  
or that the Son of God is created,  
or changeable, or alterable —*

These the church condemns.

There is a more famous Nicene Creed which was written later, but this earlier version was composed and signed by the council in 325 AD. Notice that it condemns Arius and his followers, and it clearly proclaims that Jesus is the same substance as the Father.



**Fill in the blanks.**

The doctrine which teaches that God is one God and also  
three Persons is called the Trinity. At the Council of  
Nicaea in 325 AD, the proper view of the Trinity was

presented by Athanasius. The council agreed  
with Athanasius and wrote a creed declaring  
that Jesus is the same in substance as the Father.



Baptism marks us as God's people. In this Bible verse, we are told how we are to be baptized—in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.



## Let's Think!

What words does a minister speak when he baptizes someone?

In the name of the Father and of the Son

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and of the Holy Spirit.

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What does this baptismal formula mean?

We belong to God in all his fullness - Father,

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Son, and Holy Spirit (three Persons, but one God).

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## The Decrees of God

This is another very important section of the catechism with a lot of big words!

Do you remember what 'eternal' means? If not, look back at page 37.

Eternal means existing forever.

Let's consider the first piece of the catechism answer.

**The decrees of God are his eternal purpose.**

This part tells us that the decrees of God are purposes which last forever and ever. God always determines what will happen, and his decrees do not change.

**What does 'counsel' mean?** The word 'counsel' (in this context) means 'plan.'

**What does 'will' mean?** In this context, 'will' means 'desire' or 'choice.'

Let's put together what we have defined so far:

**The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will.**

The decrees of God are purposes that last forever and ever, and he plans these things according to what he wants to happen. God does not go around asking people for advice. He does not ask anyone whether they think his plan is a good idea. He makes all the decisions himself. Remember that God is **infinitely wise**, and so all his decisions are good decisions.

**What does 'whereby' mean?** 'Whereby' is an old word which means that this is how something happens.

**What does 'fore-ordained' mean?** 'Fore' is a prefix which means 'before,' and 'ordained' means something has been chosen by God. 'Fore-ordained' indicates that God has chosen something before it occurs.

**What does 'whatsoever' mean?** 'Whatsoever' means 'everything.'

**What do we mean when we say that something 'comes to pass'?** When we say that something 'comes to pass,' we mean that it happens.

Now we know what all the words mean, so let's put the whole sentence together:

**The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass.**

The decrees of God are purposes that last forever and ever, and he plans these things according to what he wants to happen. This is how (for his own glory) he has chosen everything that happens before it occurs.

We often refer to this concept as the **sovereignty of God**. God is King over the universe and beyond. He rules over everything. He plans everything before it happens. In fact, everything happens because God has already **decreed** that it will happen.



**Fill in the blanks.**

For how long do God's purposes last? forever

Who does God ask for advice?                     No one                    

How many things does God plan?                     Everything                    

What do we mean when we talk about the sovereignty of God?

                    God rules over everything and plans                    

                    everything before it happens.

This Scripture tells us that we were chosen by God and given salvation in Christ because God planned for this to happen so that we would glorify God.



## Let's Think!

Think back to the first lesson in this workbook. What is your main purpose?

To glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

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According to Ephesians 1:11-12, what has God done so that we might be for the praise of his glory?

He chose us according to his plan.

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Those whom God has chosen for salvation in Christ are called his **elect**. These people have their hearts changed by God through the work of the Holy Spirit, and they are sealed as belonging to God. The next verse in Ephesians tells us how God marks us with his seal:

**Ephesians 1:13** And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having

believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.

Are you elect? Yes.

How do you know that you are elect? I believed when

I heard the word of truth (Ephesians 1:13)

The apostle Peter wrote a letter to the elect (God's chosen people). He sent his letter specifically to believers in places called Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Here is how he began his letter:

**I Peter 1:1-2** Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

'Foreknowledge' means something is known before it happens. 'Sprinkling of his blood' refers to sins forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ. Peter tells the elect that they were chosen by God through the work of the Holy Spirit which changed their hearts. God knew all of this and decided it before it happened.

According to this Bible passage, what should the elect do because they have been chosen by God?

They should obey God.

Did you become elect by doing good things?           No          

Why are you elect?           I am elect because God chose me.          

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Who changes your heart so that you repent for your sins and obey God?

          The Holy Spirit          

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God chose you and forgave your sins through the blood of Christ, so what should you do?

          I should live in obedience to God's commands.          

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His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said.

But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.



## Let's Think!

Did Joseph's brothers sin when they sold him as a slave?

Yes

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Did God plan for Joseph's brothers to sell Joseph as a slave?

Yes

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How do you know that God planned it?

God plans everything.

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Did God sin when he planned for Joseph's brothers to sell him as a slave? Why or why not?

No, God is infinitely, eternally, and

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unchangeably good.

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Did Joseph always have a good life in Egypt? No

What are some of the bad things that happened to Joseph in Egypt?

Joseph was a slave, and then he was sent to

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prison for a crime he did not commit.

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When Joseph was a slave or in prison, did this mean that God had forgotten him?

No, God was still with Joseph.

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How did Joseph explain to his brother's about God's decrees? What was God's reason for Joseph being sold as a slave in Egypt?

God planned it for good in order to save

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many lives.

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### Fill in the blanks.

This section of the catechism tells us that God puts his plans into action through the works of:

Creation \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ providence

**What is 'creation'?** The term 'creation' refers to making things.

**What is 'providence'?** The term 'providence' refers to sustaining and providing.

God makes us, and he also sustains and provides for us.

God made the sun and moon. This is an example of (circle one):

creation                  providence

God sends rain to make crops grow. This is an example of (circle one):

creation                  providence

## Lesson 2

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Q. 8. How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his \_\_\_\_\_ in the works of  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

### Do Not Worry

Let's look at some Bible verses about God's works of creation and providence.

**Revelation 4:11** You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.

What has God created? \_\_\_\_\_ all things \_\_\_\_\_

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus spoke about the providence of God. Let's read what he said:

**Matthew 6:25-34** “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?”

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”



## Let's Think!

Who are the pagans? \_\_\_\_\_ people who do not know the true God

What do the pagans worry about that we do not need to worry about?

They worry about what they will eat or drink

or wear

Why do we not need to worry? Our heavenly Father

knows what we need.

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Jesus gave two examples of ways in which God provides for his creatures. What are those examples?

God feeds the birds, and he clothes the flowers.

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Draw a picture of one way in which God provides for you:

## The Work of Creation

God made all things. The book of Genesis tells us that he made the world and everything in it within six days and that he made it all from nothing. He spoke everything into existence. Everything that God made was good.



### Fill in the blanks.

What did God use to make the world? Nothing

How did God create all things? He spoke them into

existence.

God is good, and all things that God made were good.



**Fill in the blanks.**

List the things God made on each day of creation.

Day 1: light, day, and night

Day 2: sky

Day 3: dry land, seas, plants

Day 4: sun and moon

Day 5: birds and fish

Day 6: land animals and man

What did God do on the seventh day? He rested

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What did God make in his own image? man and woman

What was the heresy of Arius?

Arius taught that Jesus had not always existed

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and that Jesus was a different substance than the Father

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**Gnosticism** is another heresy. People who believe Gnosticism are called **Gnostics**. Gnostics teach that matter (anything you can see and touch) is all evil and that only spirits are good. They believe that we achieve salvation by learning higher knowledge about the universe so that we can rise above our bodies and other material things to reach new spiritual levels.

Let's consider how we know this idea is wrong.



**Let's Think!**

Who made all the material things in the world (dry land, plants, animals, and so on)?

God

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What did God say about the things he created? God said that

they were good.

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Who formed the bodies of the first humans? God

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What did God say about humans after he formed them from the dust?

He said that they were very good.

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Did God create bad things at all? No

Did God ever say that spirits were better than the material things that he created?

No

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Everything that God created was good.

## In His Image

In this section of the catechism, you can clearly see that the word 'man' can refer to both men and women. It says that God created *man* both male and female.

**Why does the catechism say that God created man 'after his own image'?** God created men and women in some ways like himself. We are not God, of course, but we are made like him in certain ways. Notice that humans are the only thing God made like himself. Plants are not made in the image of God, and animals are not made in the image of God. But God created people to be like himself.

**In what ways did God make man like himself?** God created men and women to be like him in **knowledge** (what they know), **righteousness** (doing right things), **holiness** (purity), and with **dominion over the creatures** (ruling over the other things God made).



## Let's Think!

In what ways are we made like God? Knowledge, righteousness,  
holiness, dominion over the creatures.

Do we look like God physically? Does God have arms, legs, eyes, and ears?

No, God is a Spirit. He does not have a body.

Think of some things you can do that a plant or animal cannot do.

Can a dog plant seeds and tend a garden? No

Can a tree read a book? No

Does a fox ever think about whether it is right or wrong to steal a chicken from a farmer's yard?

No

Name three more things you can do that animals and plants cannot do.

Answers may vary.

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From the lips of children and infants  
you have ordained praise  
because of your enemies,  
to silence the foe and the avenger.  
When I consider your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars,  
which you have set in place,  
what is man that you are mindful of him,  
the son of man that you care for him?  
You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honor.  
You made him ruler over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under his feet:  
all flocks and herds,  
and the beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air,  
and the fish of the sea,  
all that swim in the paths of the seas.  
O LORD, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!



## Let's Think!

This psalm was written by King David. What was David thinking about when he wrote the psalm?

David was thinking about the wonderful

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things God has made.

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What amazed David? David was amazed that God

cares for man.

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David said that God had put what under the feet of mankind?

Animals, birds, and fish.

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How does this reveal that man is made in God's image?

God gave us dominion over the creatures.

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2. **Righteousness and holiness.** God gave humans the ability to learn and obey his commands. Animals and plants do not have the Bible. They do not think about whether things are right or wrong. Animals do things because they are hungry or playful or angry, but never because they are thinking about the Ten Commandments. Humans have a special ability to understand that we should obey God.
  
3. **Dominion over the creatures.** God made humans to rule over other creatures. We can grow crops, raise animals, and so on. Most children are born with a natural tendency to care for living things. Even little toddlers want to water flowers or feed a kitten. People keep dogs, cats, rabbits, fish, and other animals as pets in their homes. They mow their lawns and plant flowers. They do all these things because God gave humans dominion over the creatures.

Calvin pictures each person as a mirror. When you look into a mirror, you see an image of your face. We are like a mirror for the glory of God. God's glory shines in us, and we reflect his image.



## Let's Think!

Think back to the first lesson in this workbook.

**What is your main purpose?**

To glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

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**Why is this your main purpose?**

I was created as a mirror of God's glory.

**In which ways did God create humans as a reflection of his glory?**

In knowledge, righteousness,

and holiness, with dominion

over the creatures.

God created the first man and woman in perfect righteousness and holiness, with godly knowledge, and with dominion over the creatures. However, the first man and woman did not last long in this state of perfection.

Calvin goes on to say that we are renewed in Christ. Jesus restores us and makes us new again so that we reflect God's image as we should.



## Let's Think!

If you are renewed in the image of Christ, are you in the image of God? Why?

Jesus Christ is God.

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What special title for Jesus does Calvin mention?

Jesus is called the 'Second Adam.'

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Why do you think we refer to Jesus as the 'second Adam'?

Christ represents mankind before God in the

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covenant. He delivers and restores us.

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This discussion of the broken image of God in mankind carries on in the next workbook (*The Fall*). We will continue talking about Adam's sin and the devastating effect of this sin on mankind.