

BAPTIST SCRIPTURAL
CATECHISM

BY

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Baptist Scriptural Catechism, 1850
Henry Clay Fish, D.D.

LESSON I - The Scriptures
Part V - The Inspiration of the Scriptures

Q. (1) What is the meaning of inspiration?

A. It literally means the act of breathing into; but, as applied to the Scriptures, it means the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God on the minds of the writers, by which they were enabled to communicate the divine will.

Q. (2) May a book be genuine and authentic, but, at the same time, not inspired?

A. Will you give me an example?

Q. (3) Will you now state, definitely, what is meant, when the writers of the Scriptures are spoken of as having been inspired?

A. It is meant, that they were specially guided and instructed by God, in what they spoke or wrote.

Q. (4) Is it meant, that they were always, or at all times, under this special influence from God?

A. It is not; but as such times only as they were communicating the will of God.

Q. (5) You know that the language of wicked men, and Satan is, in some instances, found in the Bible: is it meant that *this* was inspired?

A. It is not: but only, that holy men *recorded* it under the direction and influence of the Spirit.

Q. (6) What are the *proofs*, or *evidences*, by which we know that the Scriptures were inspired?

A. The *nature of the truths*, which they communicated, was such, that must have been taught them of God.

Q. (7) Can you mention some of these truths; and show that no one, *uninspired*, could have known, and recorded them?

Q. (8) Did not the writers of the Scriptures *claim to be inspired*?

A. They did. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 2 Jer. i.4: Ezek. i:3; 2 Cor. ii:13; Gal. i:10.

Q. (9) What is the *testimony of Paul* on this subject?

A. He declares that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. iii:16.

Q. (10) We have already proved that the writers of the Scriptures were honest men, and spoke the truth; they could not therefore have *intentionally* asserted what was not true. Could they have been *deceived* in respect to their being inspired?

A. They could not.

Q. (11) Is not their testimony, then, positive proof of their inspiration?

A. It is.

Q. (12) Is not the remarkable *preservation* of the Scriptures, for so long a time, and amid so many efforts to destroy them, an evidence that they are from God?

A. It is. (It is a remarkable fact, that, had the New Testament been early banished from the earth, nearly the whole of its contents (all but 7 or 11 verses, at the most) could have been gathered from the controversial writings of the first five centuries. In proof, see "Bible Evidences," &c, p. 101, and "Life of Dr. Campbell.")

Q. (13) Can we account for the *sublimity of their style*, and the *purity of their doctrines*, and any other ground?

A. We cannot.

Q. (14) The writers of the Bible lived in different centuries, and different places; and yet there is a perfect agreement between them all in what they have written. Is not this proof of this inspiration?

A. It is.

Q. (15) Did many of them *perform miracles*? Can you mention some of them?

Q. (16) What is a miracle?

A. *An effect, or event, contrary to the established constitution, or course of things; or a deviation from the known laws of nature.*

Q. (17) Will you give an example of what would be a miracle?

Q. (18) Of what were miracles a proof?

A. Of the divine authority of one's mission and teachings.

Q. (19) Since, then, the prophets and apostles wrought miracles, is it not equivalent to *God's own testimony* that their doctrines were divine origin?

A. It was.

Q. (20) Did not the writers of the Scriptures often predict future events?

A. They did.

Q. (21) Have many of these events *already come to pass*?

A. They have.

Q. (22) Will you specify some of them?

Q. (23) Is not this another proof of their inspiration?

Q. (24) Do not the *blessed effects* of the Bible upon individual and national character, prove it to be from heaven?

A. They do.

Q. (25) Is not the *believer's own consciousness* or *internal conviction* of its heavenly origin, a proof in point?

A. It is.

LESSON II - The Scriptures

Part VI - The Integrity or Uncorruptedness of the Scriptures

Q. (1) Have we conclusive evidence, that the books of the Bible have been preserved free from material errors or alterations, since they justify the hands of their respective authors?

A. We have.

Q. (2) Were not the Jews extreme sedulous in their efforts to preserve y the manuscripts of the Old Testament in their original integrity?

A. They were.

Q. (3) Did they exercise the utmost care in transcribing them?

A. They did, comparing the transcriptions with the original, and even numbering the words and the letters.

Q. (4) What is the testimony of Josephus on this point?

A. He asserts that there was such a veneration of the Jews for the sacred Scriptures, that no one, down to his time, dared to add or take away any thing from them, or even to make the least alteration. (See Josephus against Apion, b. 1, 8.)

Q. (5) You know that Christ, and the later prophets before him, brought many serious charges against the Jews; but did they ever charge them with mutilating the Scriptures?

A. They did not.

Q. (6) Did they even intimate that they were guilty in this respect?

A. They did not.

Q. (7) Had they been guilty of it, would so great a sin have passed unrebuked?

A. It would not.

Q. (8) Do the different versions and manuscripts of the Old Testament, now extant, agree, in all essential particulars?

A. They do. (of these manuscripts there are now in extant about 1200).

Q. (9) Is it supposable that good men, since the time of Christ, should have altered the Old Testament?

A. It is not.

Q. (10) Have Christians ever charged the Jews with doing it?

A. They have not.

Q. (11) Is it possible that it should have been done, by any individual, or company of individuals, and not detected, by either Christians or Jews; especially since copies have been so numerous and so widely scattered?

A. It is not.

Q. (12) Is not all this satisfactory evidence of the purity and integrity of the Old Testament?

A. it is.

Q. (13) What evidence is there that we have the New Testament as it was at first written, or free from corruption?

A. The multiplication of copies in the original language, and of versions or translations, and their frequent private and public reading, rendered it impossible that any material and general alteration should have been made.

Q. (14) Have not Christians, from the first, entertained a reverence for the Scriptures, and a sense of the guilt of adding to or taking from them?

A. They have.

Q. (15) You know that, from an early period, there have been sects or parties among professed Christians; would not an attempt on the part of one to mutilate the word of God, have been surely noticed and made known by those who differed from them?

A. It would.

Q. (16) Can you mention any other evidence of the uncorruptedness of the Scriptures?

A. There is a remarkable agreement between them and all the quotations made from them by early writers.

Q. (17) Is there also a general agreement of all the manuscripts and versions of the New Testament now extant?

A. There is: so close is this agreement, that the worst manuscript extant does not misrepresent one article of faith, or destroy one moral precept.

Q. (18) Will You now state, in their order, the Proof's in support of the integrity or uncorruptedness Of the sacred Scriptures?

Ques. 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).

Q. (19) Does it not become us to be very thankful that we possess the word of God in its original purity?

LESSON II - The Scriptures

Part VII - The Completeness and Excellence of the Scriptures

Q. (1) We have now proved, that the Scriptures are a revelation from God. Are they the only perfect revelation of God's will, that the world will ever possess?

A. They are. "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. i. 8, 9. 2 Thes. ii. 2.

Q. (2) Do the Scriptures contain all the truths necessary to our salvation?

A. They do. They are "able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. iii. 15-17. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

Q. (3) What has God said He will do unto him who shall add any thing to His word?

A. "If any man add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Rev. xxii. 18. Deut. iv. 2. Prov. xxx. 6.

Q. (4) What will God do to him who shall take any thing away from the Scriptures?

A. "He shall take away his part out of the book of life." Rev. xxii. 9.

Q. (5) To what standard should we refer all our opinions and actions?

A. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. viii. 20. Jer. xxiii. 28.

Q. (6) Should we teach, or practise, as a Christian duty, any thing that is not laid down in the word of God?

A. We should not. "In vain do Ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 9. Col. ii. 8. Tit. i. 13, 14.

Q. (7) Should we esteem the Scriptures as of the highest value to us?

A. We should. "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." Ps. xix. 10.

Q. (8) For what are the Scriptures profitable?

A. They are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Q. (9) How should we receive the word of God?

A. We should "give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Heb. ii. 1. Luke viii. 18.

Q. (10) For what were the Bereans particularly commended?

A. For searching the Scriptures, "They received the word with all the readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Acts xvii. 11. 2 Thes. ii. 10, I 1. I Pet. ii. 1, 2.

Q. (11) Are the wicked to be condemned by the word, at the last great day, for not practising what it enjoins?

A. They are. "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John xii. 48.

Q. (12) If the Scriptures are of superlative excellence and value, ought they not to be given, without delay, to all mankind?

Q. (13) Do you heartily believe, and endeavor to practice according to all the truths revealed in the word of God?

LESSON III - Character and Attributes of God

Part 11 - The Eternity and Immutability of God.

Q. (1) Was there ever a time when God did not exist?

A. There was not. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Ps. xc. 2; cii. 12, 24; cxxxv. 13. Rom. i. 20. Rev. i. 4.

Q. (2) Will God ever cease to exist?

A. He will not. He is called the "King Eternal" and the "Everlasting King;" and again it

is said, "Thou, Lord, shalt endure to all generations." I Tim. i. 17, Jer. x. 10. Ps. cii. 12, 27; cxxxv. 13. Job. xxxvi. 26. Deut. xxxii. 4.

Q. (3) Is He uncreated and self-existent, or does He depend on some other being for his life?

A. He is uncreated and self-existent. He styles Himself "Jehovah," "I am" 'and Christ declares, "Thy Father hath life in Himself." Deut, vi. 2. Ex. iii. 14. John v. 26.

Q. (4) Is He subject to change, as are other beings?

A. He is not. He declares, "I am the Lord; f change not" Mal. iii. 6.

Q. (5) Will any of His plans and purposes be ever, in the least degree, altered?

A. They will not. "He is of one mind, and who can turn Him? And what His soul desireth, even that He doeth." Job xxiii. 13. Ps. xxxiii. I 1. Prov. xix. 21. Heb. vi. 17.

Q. (6) What are we to understand by those expressions of Scripture which represent God as repenting; as in Gen. vi. 6; Ex. xxxii. 14; Jonah iii. 10.

A. It is a change in the external discovery of his purpose, or in His mode of dealing, and not in His actual determinations or principles.

Q. (7) Is there the least ground for believing that God will change His laws by which He governs His creatures, or the plan of mercy by which He saves souls from guilt and pollution?

A. There is not; for with Him there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James i. 17.

Q. (8) If so, what effect should the doctrine of God's immutability have upon the minds of believers?

Q. (9) What effect should it have upon the minds of unbelievers?

Q. (10) Can you rejoice in the truth that God changes not, and never can change; or does it fill you with fear and trembling?

LESSON III - Character and Attributes of God Part IV - The Omnipotence and Independence of God

Q. (1) What is the meaning of omnipotence?

A. All-powerful.

Q. (2) Does the Lord declare Himself to be possessed of infinite power@

A. He does. "I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect." Gen. xvii. 1. Job xxvi. 14. Dan. iv. 35. Rev. xix. 6.

Q. (3) Can you mention a striking exhibition of His power?

A. "Behold thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm." Jer. xxxii. 17; x. 12. Isa. xi. 26.

Q. (4) Does not God sustain and govern all things?

A. He does. He "upholdeth all things by the word of, His power." "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Heb. i. 3. Rev. xix. 6.

Q. (5) Does not this require unlimited power?

A. It does.

Q. (6) Is the mind of man, as well as his body, subject to the power and control of God?

A. It is. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; He turneth it whithersoever He will." Prov. xxi. 1. Rom. ix. 21.

Q. (7) Is it to the power of the Lord that the uniform operations of nature are to be attributed?

A. It is. "He covereth the heaven with clouds; He prepareth rain for the, earth; He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains." " He forms the light and creates darkness." Ps. xviii. S. Isa. xiv. 7.

Q. (8) Is not His power concerned in every event that transpires, even the most minute and apparently unimportant?

A. It is. "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Prov. xvi. 33. Matt. x. 29.

Q. (9) Must He not, if possessed of such power, be independent of all other beings?

A. He is. He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." "None can stay His hand, or say, what doest thou?" Eph. i. 1. Dan. iv. 35,

Q. (10) If God is perfectly independent, can any other being in the universe be so?

A. It is impossible. "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things." Rom. xi. 36.

Q. (11) Is it possible for us, or even an angel in heaven., to gain an adequate conception Of this Powerful and independent God?

A. It is not. "Touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out." "His greatness is unsearchable." Job xxxvii. 23. Ps. cxiv. 3.

Q. (12) Since you are wholly in the power of this Almighty being, have you reason to fear or rejoice, judging from your present character and condition?

LESSON III - Character and Attributes of God Part V - The Justice, Truth, and Holiness of God

Q. (1) What is meant by the word justice?

A. Giving to one his due; practical conformity to the laws of rectitude.

Q. (2) Is God perfectly just in all that He does?

A. "Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment." Job. xxxiv. 12. Deut. xxxii. 4. Neh. ix, 33. Ps. lxxxix. 14. Rev. xv. 3.

Q. (3) Does He demand any thing of His creatures which it is not perfectly right that he should demand?

A. He does not. 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.'" Mic. vi. 8. Deut. x. 12.

Q. (4) Is God perfectly just in the distribution of His rewards and punishments?

A. He is: for "He shall reward every man according to his works." Every one shall "receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Matt. xvi. 27. 2 Cor. v. 10. Ps. cxii. 12. 2 Thess. i. 6.

Q. (5) Do the dealings of God with His creatures, in this world, always appear to be just?

A. They do not. The wicked sometimes "are not troubled as other men, but have more than heart could wish; while some good men are "plagued all the day long; and chastened every morning," PS. cxliii. 3-14.

Q. (6) How did Asaph solve this apparent difficulty?

A. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." Ps.

Q. (7) Do the Scriptures represent God as a God of truth as well as justice?

A. They do. He is called a "God of truth and without iniquity, and it is said of Him, "His truth endureth to all generations." Deut. xxxii. 33 Rom. iii. 4.

Q. (8) May we be confident that He will fulfill all His predictions and promises, and execute all His threatenings?

A. We may. "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it: or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good? Numb. xxiii. 19. Ps. lxxxix. 34. Prov. xi. 21; xix. 5. Matt. v. 18. Luke xvi. 17.

Q. (9) Do the Scriptures also represent God as perfectly Holy?

A. They do. "'Be Lord our God is holy." "The Lord is glorious in holiness." Ps. cxix. 9. Ex. xv. 1. Lev. ix. 2. Joshua xxiv. 19. Isa. vi. 3. Rom. ix. 14. Heb. xii. 29.

Q. (10) Can He take any pleasure in impurity or unholiness?

A. He cannot. "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee." Ps. v. 4.

Q. (11) What should be the practical effect of the doctrine of God's justice, truth, and holiness, upon the minds of Christians? Of the wicked?

Q. (12) If you are unreconciled to God, may you not well be alarmed in view of these truths?

LESSON III - Character and Attributes of God Part VI - The Goodness and Mercy of God

Q. (1) Do the Scriptures represent God as possessing the attribute of goodness
A. They do, declaring that "God is love" and that "He is good and doeth good." I John iv. 8, 16. Ps. cxix. 68. Neh. ix. 17. Matt. xix. 17.

Q. (2) Is not this apparent, also, from the light of nature?
A. It is.

Q. (3) Do the Scriptures attribute perfect goodness to God only?
A. They do. "There is none good but one, that is God. Matt. xix. 17.

Q. (4) Is He good to a 11 His cretures?
A. He is; for "He openeth His hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," and His "tender mercies are over all his works." Ps. cxiv. 16. 9.

Q. (5) Is the goodness of God liable to the least interruption?
A. It is not, "The goodness of the Lord endureth continually." Ps. iii. 1.

Q. (6) Mercy, as you know, consists in doing good to an unworthy object, and that without hope of reward; is God a God of mercy as well as goodness?
A. He is. "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy." Ps. ciii. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Eph. ii. 4.

Q. (7) Is man worthy of any blessings from God?
A. He is not worthy "of the least of all the mercies" of God. Gen. xxxii. 10. Matt. viii. 8.

Q. (8) And yet does he not receive many blessings at the hand of God?
A. He does. He is crowned "with loving kindness and tender mercies."

Q. (9) Does not this prove that God is a merciful Being?

Q. (10) Is not the very fact that we live, proof of it?
A. "It is of the Lord's mercy that we are not consuted, because His compassions fail not." Lam. iii. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

Q. (11) How has God, in the most striking manner, exhibited His mercy toward man?
A. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." I John iv. 9, 10; iii. 16. Rom. v. 8. John iii. 16.

Q. (12) Is His mercy everlasting and unchanging?

Q. (13) Should not men be very thankful, and praise God for his goodness and mercy?
A. They should. "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men." Psalm cvii. 8, xxxvi. 7-9. 1 John iv. 19.

Q. (14) How are you affected in view of these features of the divine character?

LESSON V - Man
Part II - His Fall, and Universal Corruption

Q. (1) We have already noticed that God, having made man upright, and having placed him in the garden, commanded him not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Did he *obey* that command?

A. He did not. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for good, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat; and gave also to her husband, and he did eat." Gen. iii. 6.

Q. (2) What penalty had God annexed to eating of the forbidden fruit?

A. God had said, "in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. ii. 17

Q. (3) What is meant by "death in this place; was it the death of the body, or moral and spiritual death; or was it both?

Q. (4) Did our first parents stand in such a relation to their posterity, as to involve them in the consequences of their transgressions?

A. They did. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Rom. v. 12, 19.

Q. (5) Are we not, nevertheless, alone responsible for our own sins?

A. We are.

Q. (6) What does the Bible teach concerning the wickedness of mankind?

A. It declares that "they are all gone out of the way." that "they are together become unprofitable," that "there is none righteous, no not one." Rom. iii. 10-12, 23; Eccl. vii. 20.

Q. (7) Is this corruption natural, that is, are men by *nature* depraved?

A. They are. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

Q. (8) Can we account for the very early waywardness and sinfulness of children, on any other ground than that of a natural bias to evil?

Q. (9) Is man *wholly*, or only partially depraved?

A. Wholly. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. vi. 5; Ps. xiv. 104; Rom. i. 20-32, viii. 7,8

Q. (10) Does the expression wholly depraved necessarily imply that all men are as bad as they can be?

A. It does not.

Q. (11) Does it imply that all men are equally wicked?

A. It does not.

Q. (12) Do not impenitent individuals often possess many amiable and estimable qualities?

A. They do.

Q. (13) What, then, is meant by being wholly depraved?

A. It means being who is destitute of love to God or true holiness and, not only so, but in a state of enmity against Him, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." "The carnal mind is enmity against God." John v. 42; Rom. viii. 7; Eph. ii. 1-3, 5.

Q. (14) Is every impenitent individual, because of his sinfulness, under condemnation?

A. He is. "He that believeth not is condemned already." John iii. 18; Rom. v 16.

Q. (15) Are *you* under condemnation? If so, what should be your feelings?

LESSON VI

Part III - The Atonement of Christ

Q. (1) We have seen that in Christ the divine nature was united with the human nature; why was this union necessary?

A. That he might make an atonement for sinner, by being "obedient unto death," become the Saviour of sinners. Phil. ii. 8.

Q. (2) Could not some other being have made an atonement of sufficient value, for the salvation of sinners?

A. The necessary value of his atonement consisted, mainly, in his exalted dignity; and hence God alone could make an adequate atonement.

Q. (3) Could not God have saved sinners, without an atonement?

A. He could not; for it is written, "Without shedding of blood, is no remission." Heb.-ix. 22.

Q. (4) Would God have been true to his word, if He had saved sinners without an atonement?

A. No; for He had said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. xviii. 4.

Q. (5) Did not the justice of God also stand in the way of His pardoning sinners?

A. It did. Justice demanded the infliction of the penalty of His law, which pronounced a curse upon all transgressors. Ual. iii. 10.

Q. (6) Did the atonement of Christ remove this necessity for the punishment of the guilty?

A. It did. God set him forth "to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii. 26.

Q. (7) Did Christ endure the same kind and degree of sufferings contemplated in the penalty pronounced against sinners?

A. He did not. His were not eternal sufferings, for he hath "once suffered for sins." Nor did he suffer remorse of conscience, as do souls in perdition, for he had known no sin. I Pet. iii. 18; Heb. iv. 15.

Q. (8) Did he suffer absolute despair, which, no doubt, lost souls suffer?

A. He did not; for we are taught to "consider him" who, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross," 'lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.' Heb. xii. 2, 3.

Q. (9) Since, then he did not suffer the identical penalty due to transgressors, how could God, consistently, allow them to go unpunished?

A. Because his death secured the same great moral ends which justice and the law had in view; satisfying the demands of justice, and magnifying the law and making it honorable. Rom. x. 4; John xii. 24; Isa. xlii. 21.

Q. (10) Did the atonement, in connection with the purposes of mercy which God had toward his people, render their salvation certain?

A. It did.

Q. (11) Did the atonement, in its saving design, embrace more than the elect?

A. The elect only; for whatever he designed he will accomplish, and he saves only "his people from their sins." Matt. i. 21.

Q. (12) And yet, was it not, in its nature, of sufficient value for the salvation of all mankind?

A. It was; and hence God is said to have "sent His Son into the world," "that the world through him might be saved." John iii. 17; Heb. ii. 9; John i. 29; 2 Cor. v 14-20; I. Tim. ii. 6; 1 John ii. 2.

Q. (13) Did Christ suffer in his human or his divine nature? A. It is impossible for the Deity to suffer; and we are taught; it was his soul that was "exceeding sorrowful." Matt. xxvi. 38. Isa. Iiii. 10.

Q. (14) Were Christ's sufferings very severe?

A. No doubt the were. In the garden he was 'in an agony,' and sweat "as it were great drops of. blood," and on the cross he cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Luke xxiii. 4; Matt. xxvii. 46.

Q. (15) What should be the practical effect of this great doctrine, upon every one to whom it is made known?

A. It should lead us to devout gratitude to God for his unspeakable gift, and to love him who "first loved us," and "while we were yet sinners," died for us. I John iv. 19; Rom. v S.

Q. (16) Is it the duty of every one to believe on Christ, as the Saviour of sinners?

A. It is. "He that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.

Q. (17) Will the condemnation of those who do not believe on him, be greater than it would have been, had he not died?

A. It will. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John iii. 19.

Q. (18) Are you personally interested in the atonement of Christ?

LESSON VII - Election

Q. (1) Do the Scriptures teach that, in consideration of our Saviour's voluntary condescension and death, a portion of the human family were given him of the Father. who should certainly be saved?

A. They do. Our Lord said, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me: and "All the Father giveth me, shall come unto me." John xvii. 6.

Q. (2) By what names are those thus given to Christ called in Scripture?

A. They are called "the elect," a "chosen generation," a "royal priesthood," a "holy nation," a "peculiar people." Matt. xxiv. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Q. (3) Was the electing or choosing of this people eternal?

A. It was. It is called an "eternal purpose," and it is written, "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. iii. I 1, i. 4; 2 Tim. i. 9.

Q. (4) Was it also a personal election?

A. It was. Christ said, "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine." John xv. 19, xvii. 9.

Q. (5) What is said as proof that this election was personal, in connection with the preaching of the apostles at Antioch?

A. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts xiii. 48.

Q. (6) Did God foresee obedience and faith, in those who were chosen, and, on account thereof, choost, them, making this the ground of their choice?

A. By no means. He did not choose us 'on account of foreseen obedience and faith, but, as the Scriptures teach, "unto obedience' and "belief of the truth." I Pet. i. 2; 2 Thes. ii. 13.

Q. (7) Were they chosen because of any forseen merit in them?

A. They were not. He "predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." Eph. i. 5.

Q. (8) Why, then, did He choose some to salvation, and leave others to perish?

A. Because, so it seemed good in His sight. He saith, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Matt. xi. 26; Rom. ix. 15.

Q. (9) Does the doctrine of election, when properly viewed, foster a spirit of boasting and pride in those who are chosen?

A. Not in the least. They have nothing that they have not received. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." I Cor. iv. 7, i. 31.

Q. (10) Will those who continue in their sins and finally perish, have any just grounds for finding fault with God for not having chosen them?

A. Certainly not: the choosing of some to salvation was no wrong done to them. All deserved death; and they will perish 'because they will not come unto Christ, that they might have life.' - John. v. 40. Prov. i. 24-33. Isa. Iv. 1. Matt. xx. 15; xxiii. 37.

Q. (11) Since God does not reveal who are the elect, how may it become manifest that we are among that number?

A. By our exercising "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," and being "careful to maintain good works." Acts xx. 21; Tit. iii. 8.

Q. (12) Judging by this standard, have you any reason to hope that you are an object of his electing love. If not, have you not reason for deep concern?

LESSON VIII - Regeneration and the Holy Spirit

Q. (1) What is regeneration?

A. It is being born again - "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." John i. 13.

Q. (2) Does it impart any new powers, or faculties of the body, or mind? or in other words, is it a physical or moral change?

A. It is a moral change only; for its fruits are not of a physical nature but "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." Gal. v. 22, 23.

Q. (3) Is regeneration indispensably necessary to salvation?

A. It is. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Ye must be born again." John iii. 3, 7.

Q. (4) To whose power or influence is regeneration always ascribed in the Scriptures?

A. To that of the Spirit. "He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. iii. 6; Eph. ii. 8, 10; John i. 13, iii. 6, vi. 11.

Q. (5) Why is such power necessary?

A. Because "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to evil." And they will not come to Christ that they may live. Eccl. viii. 11; John v. 40; Rom. vii. 7.

Q. (6) May the sinner justly excuse himself for his impenitence, on the ground that he must be renewed by the Holy Spirit?

A. By no means. God commands him to repent, and to love Him; and he is the more guilty because his love of sin and hatred to God are so great, that he will never do it without the Spirit. Luke xix. 27. Ezek. xviii. 31; I Pet. i. 16.

Q. (7) Is the heart renewed by the Spirit independently, or through the word?

A. Through the word. "Of his own will begat he as with the word of truth." We are said to be "born again, "by the "word of God;" and Paul says, "in Christ Jesus I have begotten you, through the gospel." James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 Cor. iv. 15.

Q. (8) Are its operations sovereign and mysterious?

A. They are. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John iii. 8.

Q. (9) Is holy love an important evidence of regeneration?

A. It is. "Every one that loveth, is born of God." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethern." I John iv. 7, iii. 14.

Q. (10) We have seen that regeneration is effected by the Spirit: is not this evidence that the Spirit is divine?

A. It is; and hence we are said both to be "born of God" and "born of the Holy Ghost." John i. 13; Tit. ii. 6.

Q. (11) Is the Holy Ghost any where explicitly called God.

A. He is. Peter said, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie against the Holy Ghost?" "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Acts v. 3, 4; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

Q. (12) Can you mention any other considerations proving his divinity?

A. He is joined, in worship, with the Father and the Son - is called Lord - and represented as performing the works of God. Matt. iii. 16, xxvii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. II, iii. 17, IS; I Cor. ii. 10; 2 Pet. i. 2.

Q. (13) Are the attributes of God ascribed to him?

A. They are: those of eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, divine power, and divine goodness. Heb. ix. 14; Ps. cxxxix. 7; Eph. ii. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 10, II; Rom. viii. II; Ps. cxliii. 10.

Q. (14) Are we dependent upon the Holy Ghost, for his saving influence?

A. We are. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." John iv. 6.3; Zech. iv. 6.

Q. (15) In view of these truths, what should be our earnest prayer?

A. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" "uphold me by thy free Spirit," and "take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Psalm li. 9, 10, II.

Q. (16) Are you giving evidence of having been renewed by the Holy Spirit?

LESSON IX - Repentance and Conversion

Q. (1) We have seen that regeneration is necessary to salvation. Do the Scriptures also represent repentance as necessary?

A. They do. John preached, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and our Saviour said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Matt. iii. 2; Luke xiii. 3-, Acts ii. 38, iii. 19, xvii. 30.

Q. (2) Is there more than one kind of repentance?

A There is a legal or false repentance, which "worketh death;" and there is a true, or evangelical repentance, "which is unto salvation." 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Q. (3) Can you mention a case of false repentance?

A. It may be seen in Judas. Matt. xxvii. 3-5.

Q. (4) Can you refer to a case of true repentance?

A. Job's was such. He said, "Mine eye seeth thee; wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job. xlii. 5, 6.

Q. (5) Does the true penitent feel a deeper sorrow for sin because it is a wrong done to God, the holiest and best of beings, than because he fears he will be punished for his sins?

A. He does. So felt David when he exclaimed, "Against thee, thee only; I have sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Psa. li. 4.

Q. (6) Does he also hate sin and love holiness?

A. He does. Like David, he can say, "I hate vain thoughts," and "every false way;" "but thy law do I love." Psa. cxix. 113, 128.

Q. (7) Does true repentance imply that the heart is renewed, and that we love God?

A. it does. They only who love the Lord truly and sincerely, hate sin. Ps. xcvi. 10. Jer. xxxi. 19.

Q. (8) Will he who truly repents, also confess his sins to God?

A. He will. It is not true repentance, unless he is led, like the Psalmist, to confess his transgressions unto the Lord. Ps. xxxii. 5; Ezra ix. 7, 10,

Q. (9) Suppose he has, in any way, wronged or defrauded his fellow man; how will he feel with reference to it?

A. He will be ready to make confession; or, like Zaccheus, to go and restore him fourfold." Luke xix. 8.

Q. (10) Must he not also forsake his evil ways?

A. He must "Cease to do evil and learn to do well." "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy." Isa. i. 16, 17; Prov. xxviii. 13.

Q. (11) This outward change in conduct is generally called conversion; is conversion closely connected with repentance, in Scripture?

A. It is. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts iii. 19.

Q.(12) What blessings will God bestow upon such as repent, and put away their sins?

A. He will pardon and accept them. "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man in his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isa. lv. 7.

Q. (13) When, by regeneration and repentance we have received a new nature, does God receive us into a new relation to himself?

A. He does. Though once "children of wrath even as others," he now adopts us as His children. "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Cor. vi. 18.

Q. (14) Is repentance man's immediate duty?

A. It is. "The Holy Ghost saith, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. iii. 7, 8.

Q. (I 5) Are you, by his renewing grace, a child of God, or do you still remain a child of wrath?

LESSON X - Faith

Q. (1) What is the meaning of faith?

A. It is belief, or confidence in the declaration of another.

Q. (2) We have seen that Jesus Christ is the sinner's only Saviour; is it man's duty to receive him as such, and rely on him for salvation?

A. It is. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi. 31.

Q. (3) What is meant, then, by believing in Christ, or having faith in him?

A. It is to receive him as he is set forth in the gospel. John i. 12.

Q. (4) Many there are who believe him to be the Son of God, believe in his miracles, and assent to the truth of his doctrines; may they believe all this, and yet be destitute of saving faith?

A. They may. "Simon himself also believed, and yet Peter assured him he was "in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity." Acts viii. 13, 23.

Q. (5) Does true faith include the consent of the heart, as well as the assent of the mind?

A. It does. 'And Philip said, if thou believed with all thine heart, thou mayest." "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Acts. viii. 37; Rom. x. 10.

Q. (6) What, then, may we define saving faith to be?

A. A firm, entire, hearty reliance on Christ for salvation.

Q. (7) Do the Scriptures place great importance upon faith?

A. They do: declaring that whosoever believeth "shall receive remission of sins," and "he that believeth not, shall be condemned." Acts x. 43; Mark xvi. 16.

Q. (8) Is this faith the gift of God?

A. It is. Our salvation is called the "gift of God," consequently all must be that is necessary to it; and Jesus is said to be "the author and the finisher of our faith." Eph. ii. 8; Heb. xii. 2.

Q. (9) Does God employ any instrumentality in producing faith in the heart?

A. He employs the truth. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Rom. x. 17,

Q. (10) What are some of the evidences of true faith?

A. To such as possess it, the Saviour "is precious," they also "overcome the world." and are "careful to maintain good works." I Pet. ii. 7; John v. 7; Tit. iii. 8.

Q. (I 1) Should one be considered a believer who does not live in the practice of good works?

A. He should not. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James ii. 26.

Q. (12) Is not he who disbelieves, guilty of an aggravated sin?

A. He is. "The wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36.

Q. (13) Are you a believer, or does the wrath of God abide on you for unbelief?

LESSON XI - Justification

Q. (1) What do you understand by justification?

A. It is declaring or pronouncing a person absolved from punishment, and righteous according to the law.

Q. (2) Does justification affect the character or the condition of the sinner?

A. The condition only; it does not, like regeneration, repentance, and faith, affect his character.

Q. (3) Does it, in the evangelical sense, imply that the individual justified does not suffer punishment because he has kept the law?

A. It does not; this would be legal justification, which never can take place, because "all have sinned." Rom. iii. 23.

Q. (4) Does God demand perfect obedience to the requirement of the law?

A. He does; and pronounces a curse upon all offenders. Gal. iii. 10.

Q. (5) Has not God, in Christ, modified the law, or relaxed its severities, so that men can be justified by fulfilling all that it required now?

A. He has not. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 18.

Q. (6) Can God, then, ever justify an individual on the ground of personal obedience to His requirements?

A. He can not. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." Rom. iii. 20.

Q. (7) Since, then, His law requires perfect righteousness in order to justification, and that law can not be changed, and since also, by nature, no man possesses this perfect righteousness, how can a human being be justified?

A. By the righteousness of Christ. "Not having on mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii. 9.

Q. (8) What is meant by the expression righteousness of Christ?

A. This expression is taken for his perfect obedience and submission to the demands of the law.

Q. (9) How does this righteousness become available to a sinner; or how does it become his, in such a sense as to allow of 'His being justified on account of it?

A. It becomes so by faith, as the recipient or instrumental cause. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Rom. ii. 28.

Q. (10) What, therefore, is God's treatment toward a sinner when he truly believes on Christ, and how does He henceforth regard him?

A. He places to his account (as it were) the righteousness of Christ, and as fully and freely justifies and accepts him as though it were his own righteousness, as though he had never committed a sin. Rom. iii. 24, iv. 5.

Q. (II) Is the believer under obligation, nevertheless, to keep the law of God?

A. Certainly he is; not as a term of condition of salvation, however, but as a rule of life. I John v. 1; Tit. iii. 8; James ii. 26, 1 Cor. ix. 25-27.

Q. (12) Does the gospel countenance, or justification encourage, antinomianism, or a disregard of the law of God?

A. By no means. "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, "we establish the law:" and "faith without works is dead. Rom. iii. 31; James ii. 20.

Q. (13) Will those who are justified ever be condemned?

A. They will not. "Who is he that condemneth? He that heareth the word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." Rom. viii. 34; John v. 24.

Q. (14) What special privileges does God confer upon those who are justified?

A. "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Rom. v. 12.

Q. (15) Are you in a state of justification, or are you still under condemnation?

LESSON XII - Sanctification

Q. (1) What is the meaning of sanctification as used in the Scriptures?

A. It sometimes means to consecrate, to set apart for a holy purpose. "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." Gen. ii. 3; Joel i. 14; John xvii. 19.

Q. (2) Is this its more common signification?

A. It is not: it more generally means to cleanse or purify from sin. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John xvii. 17; 1 Cor. vi. II; Heb. ix. 14.

Q. (3) Without sanctification in this latter sense, can any one enter heaven?

A. No, for it is written, "Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14; Rev. vii. 14.

Q. (4) Does the command of God require holiness of every man?

A. It does: it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." I Pet. i. 16; James iv. 18.

Q. (5) Does every true believer desire to be free from all sin?

A. He does; and his prayer is, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Ps. li. 2; Rom. vii. 24.

Q. (6) By whose influence is sanctification wrought?

A. That of God the Spirit. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." I Pet. i. 2.

Q. 7) Is the truth instrumental in our sanctification?

A. It is: thus our Saviour prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth. John xvii. 17; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet. i. 22.

Q. 8) Are also our trials and afflictions?

A. They are. David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word." Ps. cxix. 67.

Q. 9) Is sanctification a progressive work?

A. It is. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 18, vi. 1; Eph. iv. 13, 14.

Q. (10) Is the soul rendered perfectly holy by regeneration?

A. Regeneration is the beginning, and not the perfecting of holiness, in the heart: "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil i. 6.

Q. (11) Is any one perfectly sanctified or holy in this life?

A. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." I John i. 8.

Q. (12) What was the testimony of Solomon with reference to this point?

A. "Who can say, I am pure from sin?" "There is no man that sinneth not." "There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." Prov. xx. 9; 1 Kings vii. 46. Eccl, vii. 20.

Q. (13) What was the experience of Paul, relative to this question?

A. "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. vii. 19, 24; Gal. v. 17.

Q. (14) Why do not Christians become wholly sanctified in this life?

A. Because sin so easily besets them. "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." Heb. xii. 1; Rom. vii. 18.

Q. (15) Because no one reaches perfect sanctification in this life, should we be prevented from constant effort to put away every sin?

A. By no means. We should go on "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. " 2 Cor. vii. 1; Phil. iii. 13, 14.

Q. (16) Has the work of sanctification been commenced in you?

LESSON XIII - Perseverance of the Saints

Q. (1) What do you understand by the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints?

A. A 'patient continuance in well doing.' 'Seeking for glory, and honor, and immortality, 'till they reach "eternal life." Rom, ii. 7.

Q. (2) Does this doctrine imply that true believers never fall into sins, and those of even an aggravated character?

A. It does not. They sometimes, like David and Peter, fall into "presumptuous sins;" but "a just man falleth seven times, and riseth again." Prov. xxiv. 16; Ps. li. 3, 4; Matt. xxvi. 69-75.

Q. (3) Does it imply that a Christian may sin without penitence, and live in the habitual indulgence of known sins, and yet be saved?

A. It does not: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. xxviii. 13, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Q. (5) Does it imply that he will persevere in holiness, without his own effort, and the constant use of the means of grace?

A. It does not. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Q. (6) Does it imply that he will be saved whether he continue to maintain "good works" or not?

A. It does not. It is "by patient continuance in well doing," we reach "eternal life," and "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Rom. ii. 7; Matt. xxiv. 13.

Q. (7) Do the Scriptures, however, clearly establish the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints?

A. They do. 'The righteous shall hold on his way:" "though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down." "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Job. xvii, 9; Ps. xxxvii. 24; John x. 28; Rom. viii. 28, 29.

Q. (8) Can you mention any other passage, clearly teaching this doctrine?

A. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I Cor. x. 13.

Q. (9) Can we suppose God would begin the work of sanctification in the heart, and not complete it?

A. We cannot. "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. i. 6.

Q. (10) Are faith and eternal life represented in the Scriptures as inseparably connected?

A. They are. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John iii. 36, v. 24, x. 27.

Q. (11) Does not the doctrine that a true believer may finally perish, conflict with the covenant of redemption in which the Father gave to the Son a people who should certainly be saved?

A. It does. "This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John vi. 39.

Q. (12) Does it not also come in collision with the doctrine of Election?

A. It does. The saints are chosen "through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience." "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Pet. i. 2; 1 Thes. v. 4.

Q. (13) Does it not also conflict with the doctrine of Justification?

A. It does. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." "it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. viii. 30-34.

Q. (14) Is it not opposed to the tenor of God's covenant with His people?

A. It is. He says "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." Jer. xxxii. 40.

Q. (15) Is it not at variance with the truth of an inseparable union between Christ and the believer?

A. It is. "Ye in me and I in you." Because I live Ye shall live also." "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him." John xiv. 19, 20; Col. iii. 3, 4.

Q. (16) Is it any objection to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, that they are commanded and encouraged by promises, to persevere, and also cautioned against apostacy?

A. It is not. God has ordained the means as well as the end; and these commands, promises and cautions are not doubt, among the means, by which He secures the end He designed, even their salvation.

Q. (17) Can you mention an illustration in point: where God has determined and declared the certainty of an event, and yet made it depend upon a condition, which condition was secured by the interposition of a warning or caution?

A. An illustration is found in Paul's voyage towards Rome. Acts xxvii. 22-32.

Q. (18) Does the Bible anywhere assert that a true believer will finally apostatize, so as to fail of heaven, or mention an instance in which this has been the case?

A. It does not. Judas fell, but Christ declared him to be "a devil; "and it is said, "he went unto his own place." John vi. 70; Acts i. 25.

Q. (19) When professors, who are thought to be pious, fall away, what may we conclude respecting them?

A. "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." I John ii. 19.

Q. (20) What effect does the doctrine of perseverance produce upon true Christians?
A. It prevents despondency, and encourages them in perfecting holiness in the heart. "Everyone that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." John iii. 2, 3.

Q. (21) How should we regard a man upon whom it had a contrary effect, leading him to immortality and the neglect of Christian duty?
A. We should regard him as yet in his sins. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit." Matt. vii. 16-18.

Q. (22) Are *you* giving evidence that you are an heir to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?