

AFFIRMING THE FAITH



FROM TO BE A CHRISTIAN

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THE APOSTLES' CREED AND THE LIFE OF FAITH

All genuine Christians affirm that authentic Christianity is apostolic Christianity. Apostolic Christianity rests on the historic, eyewitness testimony of Jesus' first followers, the apostles, to the actual events of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, present heavenly reign, and promised future return. Both Jesus and his apostles understood these events to fulfill the Old Testament hopes of the kingdom (that is, the reign) of God. God's covenant with Israel prepared for this kingdom, which the Christian Church has received from Jesus and his apostles.

We learn from Scripture about these key events, including what they mean and how they hold together. Anglicans therefore affirm that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are contained in the Bible, are "God's Word written" (Articles of Religion, 20). By the second century, these essentials of apostolic faith had been organized into an outline of topics for instruction (the Rule of Faith), and this outline came to be known as the Apostles' Creed because it sums up the apostolic faith. This Creed came to be widely used by the Church as the declaration of faith made at Baptism and was later included as one of three creeds in the 1662 Anglican Prayer Book. The Apostles' Creed is the briefest and most easily memorized of these creeds, and is complemented and enlarged upon by the later Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.

To gather and focus the central truths of apostolic faith is the first task of all catechesis (instruction). That is precisely what the Apostles' Creed does. It is arranged in three paragraphs, which highlight in turn the work of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, thus distilling the teaching of Holy Scripture and reflecting the triune nature of God. It is a summary of biblical truths that is designed to lead inquirers into a grounded personal faith in the triune God.

The Apostles' Creed exists to define and defend this commitment, which is basic to being a Christian. The article on God the Creator (the Father) introduces the Creed; its central article—focused on the Person and Work of Jesus Christ—is the fullest and longest; and the article on the Holy Spirit and Christian salvation follows. As a whole, the Creed testifies to the vital core of God's self-revelation for our salvation. It is a consensus declaration that comes to us with the resounding, universal endorsement of faithful believers over nearly two thousand years. It has been recited by Christian communities throughout the history of the Church. And it is a benchmark of orthodoxy—that is, of right belief—guiding our understanding of God's revealed truth at points where our sin-clouded minds might go astray.

J. I. Packer and Joel Scandrett, eds., *To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 29–30.

ABOUT THE CREEDS

1. What is a creed?

A creed is a statement of faith. The word “creed” comes from the Latin *credo*, which means “I believe.”

(Deuteronomy 11:18—23; 26:1—11; John 20:24—29; 1 John 5:9—12)

2. What is the purpose of the creeds?

The purpose of the creeds is to declare and safeguard for all generations essential truths about God, the Church, and the world, as revealed in Holy Scripture.

(Deuteronomy 7:9—11; Psalm 145:4—13; John 20:30—31; 2 Timothy 1:13—14; Hebrews 2:1—4)

3. What does belief in the creeds signify?

Belief in the creeds signifies acceptance of God’s revealed truth and the intention to live by it. To reject any element of the creeds signifies a departure from the Christian faith. (Matthew 16:13—20; 2 Timothy 3:14—15; 4:1—5; James 2:10—26)

4. Which creeds has this church received?

This church believes the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. (Articles of Religion, 8)

5. Why do you receive and believe these creeds?

I receive and believe these creeds with the Church because they are grounded in Holy Scripture and are faithful expressions of its teaching. (Proverbs 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3—11; Philippians 2:5—11)

6. Why should you know these creeds?

I should know these creeds because they state the essential beliefs of the Christian faith. (Deuteronomy 11:18—19; 1 Timothy 6:20—21; 2 Timothy 1:13—14)

7. What is the Apostles' Creed?

The Apostles' Creed says:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

ABOUT HOLY SCRIPTURE

8. What is Holy Scripture?

Holy Scripture is “God’s Word written” (Articles of Religion, 20), given by the Holy Spirit through prophets and apostles as the revelation of God and his acts in human history, and is therefore the Church’s final authority in all matters of faith and practice. (Psalm 19:7—11; Jeremiah 36:1—8; 2 Timothy 3:14—17; Revelation 1:1—11)

9. What books are contained in Holy Scripture?

The thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament together form the whole of Holy Scripture. (Articles of Religion, 6)

10. What is in the Old Testament?

The Old Testament proclaims God’s creation of all things; mankind’s original disobedience; God’s calling of Israel to be his people; his Law, wisdom, and saving deeds; and the teaching of his prophets. The Old Testament bears witness to Christ, revealing God’s intention to redeem and reconcile the world through Christ. (Luke 24:44; 1 Corinthians 10:1—4; Hebrews 11)

11. What is in the New Testament?

The New Testament proclaims Jesus Christ’s birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension; the Church’s early ministry; the teaching of the apostles; the revelation of Christ’s eternal kingdom; and the promise of his return. (Luke 24:45—49; Acts 1:1—11; Philippians 2:5—11)

12. How are the Old and New Testaments related to each other?

The Old Testament is to be read in the light of Christ, and the New Testament is to be read in light of God's revelation to Israel. Thus the two form one Holy Scripture, which reveals the Person of Jesus Christ and his mighty works. As Saint Augustine says, "The New is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed." (Augustine of Hippo, Questions in the Heptateuch 2.73; see also Matthew 5:17–18; Luke 24:25–27)

13. What does it mean that Holy Scripture is inspired?

Holy Scripture is "God-breathed," for the biblical authors wrote under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to record God's Word. (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:19–21)

14. What does it mean that Holy Scripture is the Word of God?

The Old and New Testaments are inspired by the Holy Spirit and are therefore the Word of God written. God is revealed in his mighty works and in the incarnation of our Lord, which are made known through the inspired writings of the biblical authors. God "has spoken through the prophets" (Nicene Creed) and continues to speak through Scripture today. (Psalm 33:4–9; Jeremiah 1:9; Ezekiel 2:1–3:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 3:15–16; Hebrews 1:1–2)

15. Why is Jesus Christ called the Word of God?

The fullness of God's revelation is found in Jesus Christ, who not only fulfills the Scriptures, but is himself God's

Word, the living expression of God’s mind. The Scriptures testify about him, “In the beginning was the Word,” and “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:1, 14). Therefore, “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.” (Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, prologue; see also Genesis 1:26—27; Psalm 33:1—12; Colossians 1:15—19)

16. How should Holy Scripture be understood?
Because Holy Scripture was given by God to the Church, it should always be understood in ways that are faithful to its own plain meaning, to its entire teaching, and to the Church’s historic interpretation. It should be translated, read, taught, and obeyed accordingly. (Nehemiah 8:1—8; Psalm 94:8—15; Acts 8:26—35; 18:24—28; Jerusalem Declaration, Article 2; Articles of Religion, 20)

17. How does the Holy Spirit use Holy Scripture in your life?
Through Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit will teach, rebuke, correct, and train me in the righteousness that God desires. The prayerful study of Scripture forms me for life in Christ and the service of God and my neighbor. (Psalm 119:105; John 14:26; 2 Timothy 3:16—17; Hebrews 4:12—13; see questions 227—32)

THE APOSTLES' CREED, ARTICLE I

“I BELIEVE IN GOD”

18. Who is God?

God is one divine Being eternally existing in three divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Holy Trinity. (Deuteronomy 6:4—7; Psalm 86:8—10; Isaiah 44:6—8; Matthew 3:16—17; 28:19; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

19. What does Holy Scripture tell us about the character of God?

God is both loving and holy. God mercifully redeems fallen creation, while righteously opposing all sin and evil. The Lord Jesus Christ is the fullest revelation of God's holy love. (Exodus 34:6—7; Psalm 145; John 1:14—18; 14:9—10; Romans 5:6—11; Hebrews 1:1—3)

“THE FATHER ALMIGHTY”

20. Who is God the Father?

God the Father is the first Person of the Holy Trinity, from whom the Son is eternally begotten and the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds. (Psalm 104; John 1:1, 14; 15:26; 1 Corinthians 2:10—16; 1 Peter 1:10—12; Nicene Creed)

21. Why do you call the first of the three divine Persons “Father”?

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only divine Son of the Father. He called God “Father” and taught his disciples to do the same. God gives believers his Holy Spirit and adopts us as his children, enabling us to call him “Father.” (Deuteronomy 32:4–9; Psalm 2; Matthew 6:6–9; John 5:17–23; Galatians 4:1–7)

22. What do you mean when you call God “Father”?
When I call God “Father,” I declare that I was created for relationship with him, that I trust in God as my Protector and Provider, and that I put my hope in God as his child and heir in Christ. (Genesis 1:26–27; Psalms 68:4–6; 103:13–14; Matthew 6:25–34; Romans 8:17–21)

23. Why do you call God the Father “Almighty”?
I call the Father “Almighty” because he has power over everything and accomplishes everything he wills. Together with his Son and Holy Spirit, the Father is all-knowing and ever present in every place. (Psalm 139:1–16; Isaiah 40:12–26; Daniel 4:34b–37; Luke 1:34–37; Revelation 4:8b–11)

“CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”

24. Why do you call God the Father “Creator”?

I call God the Father “Creator” because he made all things. He creates and sustains all things through his Word, and gives life to all creatures through his Spirit.

(Genesis 1:1—2:3, 7; Psalm 104:24—30; John 1:1—3; Acts 17:24—28; Colossians 1:16—18)

25. How does recognizing God as Creator inform your understanding of his creation?

I acknowledge that God created for his own glory everything that exists. He created human beings, male and female, in his image and appointed us stewards of creation. God's creation is thus a gift to enjoy as we work and care for it. (Genesis 1:27—28; 2:15; Psalm 8:5—8; Luke 19:11—27; 1 Corinthians 4:1—2)

26. What does it mean that God created both heaven and earth?

It means that all things, whether visible or invisible, physical or spiritual, were brought into being out of nothing by the Word of the eternal God. (Genesis 1:1—8; Psalm 33:6—8; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)

27. Was the world that God created good?

Yes. God created all things and called them “very good” (Genesis 1:31). However, through sin, evil and death have come into the world and corrupted it. (Genesis 3:1—8; Psalm 14:1—3; Matthew 15:18—20a; Romans 1:18—32; 1 Timothy 4:4—5)

28. If God created the world good, why do we sin?

Adam and Eve rebelled against God, thus bringing upon all humanity pain, toil, alienation from God and each other, and death. I have inherited this fallen and corrupted human nature; consequently, I too sin and fall

short of God's glory. (Genesis 3:16—4:26; Psalm 51:3—5; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 7:14—25)

29. What are the consequences of sin?

Because of sin, those apart from Christ are spiritually dead, separated from God, under his righteous condemnation, and without hope. (Genesis 3:16—19; Psalm 90:3—12; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:36; Romans 6:20—23; Galatians 5:19—21; Ephesians 2:1—3)

A Prayer for the Father's Love

Gracious Father, I come to you through the saving work of your Son Jesus Christ upon the Cross. Thank you for adopting me as your child through the Holy Spirit. Grant me the grace to know the fullness of your fatherly love, that I may delight in the promises of your eternal Kingdom, both now and in the age to come. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED, ARTICLE II

“I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST”

30. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the eternal Word and Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. He took on human nature to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the only Mediator between God and fallen humanity. (Psalm 2; Malachi 3:1; John 1:1–18; Philippians 2:5–11; 1 Timothy 2:5–6)

31. What does “Jesus” mean?

“Jesus” means “God saves” and is taken from the Hebrew name Yeshua or Joshua. In Jesus, God has come to save us from the power of sin and death. (Joshua 1:1–9; Psalm 20; Matthew 1:18–25; Romans 8:1–2)

32. What does “Christ” mean?

Christos is the Greek term for the Hebrew title Messiah, meaning “Anointed One.” Old Testament kings, priests, and prophets were anointed with oil. Jesus the Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit to perfectly fulfill these roles, and he rules now as Prophet, Priest, and King over his Church and all creation. (Exodus 40:12–16; 1 Samuel 16:11–13; 1 Kings 19:15–16; Psalm 89:19–29; Luke 3:21–22; 4:14–21; Acts 10:38; Hebrews 4:14–5:10)

“HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD”

32. Why is Jesus called the Father’s “only Son”?

Jesus alone is God the Son, coequal and coeternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He alone is the image of the invisible Father, the one who makes the Father known. He is now and forever will be incarnate as a human, bearing his God-given human Name. The Father created and now rules all things in heaven and earth through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Psalm 2:7–12; John 1:14–18; Colossians 1:13–15; Hebrews 1:1–5; see also Athanasian Creed)

33. What do you mean when you call Jesus Christ “Lord”?

I acknowledge Jesus’ divine authority over the Church and all creation, over all societies and their leaders, and over every aspect of my life, both public and private. I surrender my entire life to him and seek to live in a way that pleases him. (Daniel 7:13–14; Matthew 7:21–23; Luke 9:23–26; Ephesians 1:15–23; Colossians 1:16–18)

“HE WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY”

34. What does it mean that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit?

Jesus was conceived not through a human father but by the Holy Spirit coming upon the Virgin Mary in power. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–20; Luke 1:26–38)

35. What happened at Jesus' conception in Mary's womb?

The eternal Son, whom God named Jesus, assumed a fully human nature from his mother, the Virgin Mary, at the moment of conception in her womb. (John 1:1—3, 14; 8:56—58; Philippians 2:6—8; Colossians 2:9)

36. Why is it important to say that Jesus was born?

It is important to affirm that he is one of us: truly human, born to a human mother, and raised in a human family. (Luke 2:41—52; Hebrews 2:17—18)

37. Was Mary the only biological parent of Jesus?

Yes. While still a virgin, Mary submitted to the will of God and bore the Son of God. Therefore, she is held in high honor. However, in obedience to God, Joseph took Mary as his wife and raised Jesus as his son. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18—25; 13:55)

38. What is the relationship between Jesus' divine and human natures?

At the moment of Jesus' conception, the divine nature of the one eternal Person of the Son was united to our human nature. Therefore, Jesus Christ is fully and truly both divine and human, but without sin. His two natures are united without division, separation, mixture, or change. (Luke 1:26—38; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6—8; Hebrews 2:10—16; 1 John 4:2—3; Definition of Chalcedon)

39. What does the union of Jesus' two natures teach you about his ministry?

All Jesus does as a human being he also does as God. His human words and deeds are saving because they are the words and deeds of God the Son. (John 5:19–29; Romans 8:1–4; Colossians 1:19–23; Hebrews 4:14–16)

“HE SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE”

40. Why did Jesus suffer?

Jesus suffered as a sacrifice for our sins so that we could have peace with God, as prophesied in the Old Testament: “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 52:13–53:12, see 53:5; John 1:29; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4)

41. In what ways did Jesus suffer?

On earth, the incarnate Son shared physically, emotionally, and spiritually in the temptations and sufferings common to all people, yet without sin. In his agony and desolation on the Cross, he uniquely suffered in my place for my sins and, in so doing, revealed God's love and compassion for fallen and suffering humanity. (Psalm 22:1–24; Matthew 4:1–10; 27:26–50; Hebrews 4:14–16)

42. How do Jesus' sufferings help you?

Jesus has experienced our sufferings, understands our sorrows, and is able to sympathize with our weakness. Therefore, I should bear my sufferings with perseverance and hope, for my Savior is with me in them, and through them I will come to know him more fully. (Job 9:32—35; Psalm 22:22—26; Isaiah 53:4—7; Luke 4:1—13; Hebrews 4:14—5:10)

43. Why does the Creed say that Jesus suffered under the Roman governor Pontius Pilate?

The Creed thus makes clear that Jesus' life and death were real events that occurred at a particular time and place in Judea in the first century AD. (Psalm 2:1—6; Luke 3:1—2, 23; Acts 4:24—28).

“WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND WAS BURIED” “HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD”

44. What happened at Jesus' crucifixion?

Jesus was executed as a common criminal. He was scourged, mocked, and nailed to a Cross outside the walls of Jerusalem. Though humanly a miscarriage of justice, his execution fulfilled God's plan of salvation. (Psalm 22:1—21; Isaiah 53:8; Matthew 27:22—26)

45. What did Jesus accomplish on the Cross?

Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures by dying on the Cross as a sacrifice for sin in obedience to his Father. He thereby showed the depth of the love of God for his fallen creation, satisfying the justice of God on our behalf and

breaking the power of sin, Satan, and death. (Leviticus 23:18—21; Psalm 34:15—22; Colossians 2:13—15; Hebrews 10:11—14)

46. What does Jesus' death mean for you?

Jesus bore my sins and died the death that I deserve, so that I could be saved from sin and eternal condemnation and reconciled to God. (Psalm 32:1—2; Isaiah 53:10—12; Matthew 20:28; Romans 5:8—10; 2 Corinthians 5:17—21)

47. Why does the Creed make a point of saying that Jesus died?

The Creed makes the point to emphasize that Jesus died a real, bodily death such as all people face because of our sins. (Psalm 22:14—15; Isaiah 53:8—9; Matthew 27:45—50; John 19:30—35)

48. Why does the Creed emphasize Jesus' death in this way?

The Creed emphasizes Jesus' death to counter suspicions that Jesus did not truly die on the Cross, to celebrate the fact that he died there to secure our salvation, and to prepare our minds to grasp the glory of his bodily resurrection. (John 19:31—34; 1 John 5:6—8)

49. What does the Creed mean by saying that Jesus descended to the dead?

That Jesus descended to the dead means that he truly died and entered the place of the departed. (Psalm 16:9—10; Acts 2:25—32; Ephesians 4:9—10; 1 Peter 3:18—19)

“ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN”

51. What does the Creed mean when it affirms that Jesus rose again from the dead?

It means that Jesus was not simply resuscitated; God restored him physically from death to life in his resurrected body, never to die again. His tomb was empty; Jesus had risen bodily from the dead. The risen Jesus was seen by his apostles and hundreds of other witnesses. (Psalm 30:1—5; Luke 24:1—12; John 20:1—18; Acts 1:3; 1 Corinthians 15:3—8)

52. What kind of earthly life did Jesus have after he rose from the dead?

Following his resurrection, Jesus spent forty days visiting and teaching his followers. He appeared to his disciples, spoke to them, invited them to touch him and see his scars, and ate with them. (Luke 24:13—49; John 20:19—29; Acts 1:1—8)

“HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN”

53. How should you understand Jesus’ ascension into heaven?

Jesus was taken up out of human sight and returned in his humanity to the glory he had shared with the Father before his incarnation. There he intercedes for, and receives into heavenly life, all who come to him in faith. Though absent in body, Jesus is always with me by his

Spirit and hears me when I pray. (John 17:5; Acts 1:9—11; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:23—25)

54. What resulted from the ascension?

Jesus ascended into heaven so that, through him, his Father might send us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit, Christians together are united to Christ, the living Head of his Body, the Church. (John 14:15—17, 25—26; 16:7—15; Acts 2:33—36; Ephesians 4:7—16)

“AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER”

55. What does it mean for Jesus to sit at God the Father’s right hand?

The throne on the king’s right hand was traditionally the seat of one appointed to exercise the king’s own authority. Ruling with his Father in heaven, Jesus is Lord over the Church and all creation, with authority to equip his Church, advance his kingdom, bring sinners into saving fellowship with God the Father, and finally establish justice and peace upon the earth. (Psalm 2; Isaiah 9:6—7; Acts 2:33—36; Ephesians 1:20—23; Hebrews 1:3—14)

56. What does Jesus do for you as he sits at the Father’s right hand?

Because Jesus intercedes for us as our great high priest, I may now boldly approach the Father and offer my confessions, praises, thanksgivings, and requests to him.

(Exodus 33:7—17; Psalm 80; Hebrews 4:14—16; 7:24—8:2)

57. What does Jesus' heavenly ministry mean for your life today?

I can rely on Jesus always to be present with me by the Holy Spirit as he promised, and I should always look to him for help as I seek to serve him. (Joshua 1:9; Psalm 3; Matthew 28:20; John 14:15—20)

“HE WILL COME AGAIN TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD”

58. What does the Creed mean when it says, “He will come again”?

Jesus promised that he would return (Luke 21:27—28). His coming in victory with great glory and power will be seen by all people and will bring this age to an end. The present world order will pass away, and God will usher in a fully renewed creation to stand forever. All the saints will be together with God at that time. (Proverbs 30:4; Daniel 7:13—14; Luke 21:27—28; Acts 1:10—11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13—18; 2 Peter 3:3—13; Revelation 21:1—4)

59. Can we know when Jesus will return?

No. We cannot know when Jesus will return. Jesus patiently waits for many to repent and trust in him for new life; then he will return unexpectedly, which could

be at any moment. (Matthew 24:36—44; 1 Thessalonians 5:1—3)

60. How should you live in anticipation of Jesus' return? I should anticipate with joy the return of Jesus my Savior and be ready to stand before him. His promise to return encourages me to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to live a holy life, and to share the hope of new life in Christ with others. (Deuteronomy 30:1—10; Matthew 25:13—30; 1 Thessalonians 5:4—11; Titus 2:11—14)

61. How should you understand Jesus' future judgment? All people, whether living or dead, will be judged by Jesus Christ. Those apart from Christ will receive eternal rejection and punishment in hell, while those who are in Christ will receive eternal blessing and welcome into the fullness of life with God. (Psalm 50:1—6; Matthew 25:31—46; Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

62. Should you be afraid of God's judgment? The unrepentant should fear God's judgment, for "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness" (Romans 1:18). But if I am in Christ, I need not fear God's judgment, for my Judge is my Savior, Jesus Christ, who loves me, died for my sins, and intercedes for me. (Psalm 130; Proverbs 28:13—14; John 5:24—30; Romans 8:1, 31—34)

63. What does Scripture mean when it tells you to fear God? It means that I should live mindful of his presence, walking in humility as his creature, resisting sin, obeying

his commandments, and reverencing him for his holiness, majesty, and power. (Exodus 20:18—20; Psalm 25:12—14; Proverbs 9:10; Acts 5:1—11; 1 Peter 1:13—21; Revelation 14:6—7)

64. How do you rightly live in the fear of God?

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I examine my conscience according to the Word of God. Particularly useful are the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, as well as the godly counsel of fellow Christians and the moral teaching of the Church. (Exodus 20:1—17; Psalm 139:23—24; Matthew 5—7; 1 Corinthians 4:1—5)

65. How does the Church exercise its authority to judge?

The authority Christ gave to his Church to judge is most often exercised by declaring God's forgiveness in absolution. However, a priest, acting under the authority of the bishop, may suspend a person from receiving Communion because of scandalous and unrepented sin, in order to draw them to repentance and restoration. (Psalm 32; Matthew 16:19; 18:15—17; John 20:21—23; 1 Corinthians 5:1—13)

A Prayer for the Son's Mission

O Jesus, God the Son, in your incarnation you manifested your heart of mission in the world: Help me so to know and practice your presence, that I may always live for your glory and the spread of your Kingdom; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED, ARTICLE III

“I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT”

66. Who is the Holy Spirit?

God the Holy Spirit is the third Person in the one Being of the Holy Trinity, coequal and coeternal with God the Father and God the Son, and equally worthy of our honor and worship. (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 104:30; Matthew 3:16—17; 28:19; John 15:26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

67. What principal names does the New Testament give to the Holy Spirit?

Jesus names the Holy Spirit “Paraclete” (“the one alongside”), which signifies Comforter, Guide, Counselor, Advocate, and Helper. Other descriptions for the Holy Spirit are “Spirit of God,” “Spirit of your Father,” “Spirit of Christ,” and “Spirit of truth.” (Matthew 10:20; John 14:16—17, 26; Acts 16:7; Romans 8:9)

68. What are the particular ministries of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit imparts life to every living thing in creation, reveals God’s Word to his people, and calls sinners to a new life of faith in the saving and life-giving work of Jesus. The Holy Spirit unites Christians to Jesus, indwelling them, convicting them of sin, giving them spiritual gifts, and bearing spiritual fruit in their lives. (1 Samuel 16:13; Psalm 143:7—12; Isaiah 11:2; Joel 2:28—29; John 15:26; 16:7—11; Acts 4:5—31)

69. How does the Holy Spirit strengthen you for life in Christ?

The Holy Spirit bears witness that I am a child of God, stirs my heart continually to worship and to pray, and inspires me to holiness and good works in Christ. (Job 27:2–4; Matthew 10:19–20; John 14:12; 16:12–15; Acts 6:10; 13:2; Romans 8:15–17, 26–27)

70. How do you receive the Holy Spirit?

The Scriptures teach that, by repenting and being baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, I am forgiven my sins and I receive the Holy Spirit, who gives me new birth in Christ and frees me from the power of sin. (Luke 11:11–13; John 3:1–7; Acts 2:38; 8:14–17; 19:1–6; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11; 12:13; 2 Timothy 1:6–7)

71. What is the fruit of the Holy Spirit?

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the very character of Jesus developing in us through the work of the Holy Spirit: “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (Galatians 5:22–25; see also Matthew 7:15–20; 12:33–35)

72. What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Among the many gifts of the Holy Spirit named in the New Testament are faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, other languages (“tongues”), the interpretation of other languages, and words of wisdom and knowledge. The Spirit distributes gifts to individuals as he wills for the sake of the Body of Christ. Other gifts in the New Testament include administration, service, encouragement, evangelism, teaching, giving, leadership, and mercy. Jesus promises that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. (Luke 11:13;

Romans 12:3—8; 1 Corinthians 12:7—31; Ephesians 4:7—11; 1 Peter 4:10—11)

73. Why does the Holy Spirit give such gifts?

The Holy Spirit equips and empowers believers with gifts for service in the worship of Jesus Christ, for the building up of his Church, and for witness and mission to the world. (Exodus 31:1—11; Luke 9:1—6; 1 Corinthians 12:12—26; Ephesians 4:12—16)

A Prayer for the Holy Spirit's Ministry

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle in me the fire of your love. Direct and rule my heart in all things, empower me for witness and ministry, and daily increase in me your gifts and fruit, to the glory of God the Father; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH”

74. What is the Church?

The Church is the whole community of faithful Christians in heaven and on earth, called and formed by God into one people. The Church on earth gathers to worship God in Word and Sacrament, to serve God and neighbor, and to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. (Exodus 19:4—6; Psalm 22:22—23; Matthew 28:19—20; Ephesians 2:11—22; 1 Peter 2:4—10; Articles of Religion, 19)

75. How does Holy Scripture teach you to view the Church?

Holy Scripture teaches me to view the Church as God's family, as the Body and bride of Christ, and as the temple where God in Christ dwells by his Spirit. (Isaiah 54:5—8; Hosea 2:16—20; Matthew 12:46—50; 1 Corinthians 3:16—17; 2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1; Revelation 5:9—10; 19:6—10)

76. Why is the Church called the Body of Christ?

The Church is called the Body of Christ because all who belong to the Church are united to Christ as their Head and source of life, and are united to one another in Christ for mutual love and service to him. (Romans 12:4—5; 1 Corinthians 12:12—27; Ephesians 1:22—23; 5:25—30)

77. What are the “marks” or characteristics of the Church?

The Nicene Creed expands upon the Apostles' Creed to list four characteristics of the Church: it is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” (see Articles of Religion, 8)

78. In what sense is the Church “one”?

The Church is one because all its members form the one Body of Christ, having “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” (Ephesians 4:5—6). The Church is called to embody this unity in all relationships between believers. (Psalm 133; John 17:11, 20—23; Ephesians 2:11—22; 4:2—6)

79. Why is the Church called “holy”?

The Church is holy because the Holy Spirit dwells in it and sanctifies its members, setting them apart to God in Christ and calling them to moral and spiritual holiness of life. (Exodus 19:3–6; Leviticus 19:1–2; 20:22–26; Psalm 15; John 17:17–19; Acts 26:16–18; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; Colossians 3:12–15)

80. Why is the Church called “catholic”?

The Church is called “catholic” (“according to the whole”) because it keeps the whole faith it has received from the Lord, in continuity with the whole Church, in all times and places. (Micah 4:1–4; Acts 2:1–11; 1 Corinthians 15:1–8; 2 Timothy 1:13–14; Jude 3; Revelation 5:9–10)

81. Why is the Church called “apostolic”?

An apostle is one who is sent. The Church is called “apostolic” because it holds the faith of the first apostles sent by Christ. In continuity with them, the Church is likewise sent by Christ to proclaim the Gospel and to make disciples throughout the whole world. (Matthew 10:1–4, 40–42; 28:18–20; Acts 2:42; 13:1–4; Ephesians 2:19–21)

“THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS”

82. Who are the saints?

The saints are all those in heaven and on earth who place their faith in Jesus Christ, who are set apart, holy to God in Christ, and transformed by his grace. (Leviticus

19:1—2; Deuteronomy 7:6; Psalm 16:1—3; 1 Peter 2:4—10; Revelation 7:9—17)

83. What does the word “communion” mean?

“Communion” means being “one with” someone in union and unity. For Christians, it refers to the unity of the three Persons within the one Being of God, to our union with God through our union with Christ, and to our unity with one another in Christ. (Psalm 85; Ezekiel 37:24—28; John 17:20—26; 2 Corinthians 13:11—14; 1 John 1:1—3)

84. What is the “communion of the saints”?

The communion of the saints is the fellowship of all those, in heaven and on earth, who are united in Christ as one Body, through one Spirit, in Holy Baptism. (Psalm 149; Ephesians 2:13—22; Hebrews 12:1—3)

85. How do you participate in the communion of the saints?

I live as a member of the communion of saints through faith in Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit by gathering to worship God with my fellow Christians, by praying for and encouraging one another, and by coming to one another’s aid in times of trouble, sickness, or grief. (Psalm 133; Acts 2:42—47; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11—18; Hebrews 10:24—25; James 5:13—20)

86. How are the Church on earth and the Church in heaven joined in worship?

Through union with Christ, as celebrated in the sacrament of Holy Communion, the Church on earth participates with the Church in heaven in the eternal worship of God. (Exodus 24:9—11; Psalm 148; 1 Corinthians 10:16—17; Hebrews 12:18—29; Revelation 19:1—9)

“THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS”

87. What are sins?

Sins are intentions, acts, or failures to act that arise out of my corrupted human nature and fall short of conformity to God’s revealed will. (Psalm 53; Isaiah 59:1—15; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4—10)

88. How does God respond to human sin?

All sin is opposed to the righteousness of God and is therefore subject to God’s holy condemnation; yet God in his mercy offers me forgiveness and salvation from sin through his Son, Jesus Christ, the only Savior. (Psalm 130; Isaiah 1:2—4; Micah 7:18—19; John 3:17—21; Romans 1:18—2:4; 3:24—26; 5:6—10)

89. How does God forgive your sins?

By virtue of Christ’s atoning sacrifice, in which I put my trust, God sets aside my sins, accepts me, and adopts me as his child and heir in Jesus Christ. Loving me as his child, he forgives my sins whenever I turn to him in repentance and faith. (Leviticus 26:40—45; Psalm

78:35—39; Matthew 26:27—28; Luke 15:11—32; 2 Corinthians 5:16—21; Galatians 4:1—7)

90. How should you respond to God's forgiveness?
Trusting in God's continual forgiveness, I should live in continual thanks, praise, and obedience to him; and as I have been loved and forgiven by God, so I should love and forgive those who sin against me. (Psalm 51:7—17; Isaiah 44:21—23; Matthew 6:12; 18:21—35; Ephesians 4:32)

91. What is grace?

Grace is God's undeserved gift of his love, mercy, and help, which he freely offers to us who, because of our sin, deserve only condemnation. (Genesis 50:15—21; Psalm 106; Joel 2:12—13; Luke 7:36—50; Romans 5:15—21; Ephesians 2:4—9; Hebrews 4:14—16)

92. For what purpose does God give you grace?

God gives me grace in Christ for the forgiveness of my sins, redemption from sin's power, healing of sin's effects, and growth in holiness, to my final transformation into the likeness of Christ. (Psalms 25:6—12; 119:29—32; Jonah 3; Matthew 9:1—8; Romans 6:1—11; 2 Corinthians 3:16—18; Titus 3:4—7)

93. Can you earn God's grace?

No. God gives his grace freely and enables me to receive it. Everything I do for God should be in response to his love and grace made known in Christ, for "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us," and "we love because he first loved us." (Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:19; see also Exodus

34:5—10; Psalm 23; John 10:7—18; Ephesians 2:1—10; 2 Timothy 1:8—10)

94. Is God's grace only for your religious or spiritual life?
No. God wants to redeem every aspect of my life, and his grace in Christ is at work in all of it. (Psalm 40; Isaiah 1:13—20; Matthew 6:25—33; Titus 2:11—14)

95. Does God give grace only to Christians?
No. God's common grace can be seen in his provision for all people. "He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). However, he shows his saving grace by granting salvation to those who place their faith in Christ. (Psalms 65:5—13; 145:8—9; Acts 14:15—17; Romans 5:1—11)

"THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY"

96. What does Holy Scripture tell you about your body?
Holy Scripture tells me that my body, though tainted by sin, was created good, bearing the image of God and endowed with great dignity. Therefore, from the moment of conception to natural death, every human body and every human life should be cared for, protected, and loved. (Genesis 1:26—28; Psalm 139:7—18; Matthew 11:2—5; 1 Corinthians 6:19—20; James 3:8—10)

97. Why will you die?

Because sin and death now corrupt this world, my body will degenerate and die. But, by the will of God, my soul will be with the Lord, and I will rise bodily from death when Jesus Christ returns to judge the living and the dead. (Genesis 2:15—17; 3:22—24; Psalm 82:7; Ecclesiastes 2:16; John 6:35—40; Romans 5:12—14; 1 Corinthians 15:13—28)

98. What is the resurrection of the body?

When the risen Lord Jesus returns to judge the earth, he will raise all the dead to bodily life. The wicked will then receive eternal condemnation, and the righteous eternal life in the glory of God. (Psalm 16; Ezekiel 37:1—14; Daniel 12:1—3; Matthew 25:31—34, 41, 46; John 5:25—29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13—17; Revelation 20:11—15)

99. What do you know about the resurrected bodies of believers?

They will be fully renewed and glorified in the image of Christ, perfected after the manner of his own resurrected and ascended body. (Job 19:25—27; John 11:23—27; 1 Corinthians 15:35—58; Philippians 3:20—21)

100. How should you live as you await the resurrection of your body?

Because I put my hope in God's resurrection of my body, I should honor and care for it. I should refrain from any violence, disrespect, or sin that would harm, demean, or violate either my body or the bodies of others. (Psalm 35:9—10; Matthew 25:35—45; Romans 6:5—14; 1 Corinthians 6:9—20; 1 John 3:1—3)

“AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING”

101. What do you know about the unending resurrected life of believers?

I know that it will be an eternal life of joyful fellowship with our triune God, together with all his saints and angels, singing his praises and serving him in the renewed creation. (John 17:20—24; Revelation 7:9—17; 21:1—4; 21:22—22:5)

102. How should you live in light of this promise of unending life?

I should live in joyful expectation of the fullness of my transformation, soul and body, into the likeness of Christ. In the midst of suffering or in the face of hostility and persecution, I am sustained by the hope of a new heaven and earth, freed from Satan, evil, suffering, and death. (Psalm 21:1—7; John 14:1—7; Romans 13:11—14; 2 Corinthians 4:16—5:11; Philippians 3:7—21; 1 Peter 1:3—9; 5:6—11)

CONCERNING SACRAMENTS

103. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. God gives us the sign as a means by which we receive that grace and as a tangible assurance that we do in fact receive it. (Genesis 17:1—21; John 6:53—58; Romans 2:25—29; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1662 Catechism)

104. How should you receive the sacraments?

I should receive the sacraments by faith in Christ, with repentance and thanksgiving. Faith in Christ is necessary to receive the grace of the sacraments, and obedience to Christ is necessary for the benefits of the sacraments to bear fruit in my life. (Mark 16:16; John 6:52—58; Acts 2:38—47; 1 Corinthians 11:27—32; 1662 Catechism; Articles of Religion, 28)

105. What sacraments were ordained by Christ?

The two sacraments ordained by Christ that are “generally necessary to salvation” (1662 Catechism) are Baptism and Holy Communion (also called the Lord’s Supper or the Holy Eucharist). These are sometimes called “sacraments of the Gospel.” (Articles of Religion, 25; see also Matthew 28:19—20; Luke 22:14—20; John 6:52—58; 1 Corinthians 11:23—26; 2 Corinthians 1:21—22)

BAPTISM

106. What is the outward and visible sign in Baptism?

The outward and visible sign is water, in which candidates are baptized “in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (Book of Common Prayer 2019; see also Genesis 9:8—17; Matthew 28:19—20; 1 Peter 3:18—22)

107. What is the inward and spiritual grace given in Baptism?

The inward and spiritual grace is death to sin and new birth to righteousness, through union with Christ in his death and resurrection. I am born a sinner by nature, separated from God. But in Baptism, through faith in Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit, I am made a member of Christ’s Body and adopted as God’s child and heir. (Psalm 51:1—2, 7—10; Ezekiel 36:25—26; John 3:3—5; Romans 6:1—11; Colossians 2:9—14)

108. What is required of you when you come to be baptized?

Two things are required: repentance, in which I turn away from sin; and faith, in which I turn to Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord and trust the promises that God makes to me in this sacrament. (Psalm 51:3—6, 13—17; Mark 1:14—15; Acts 2:37—38)

109. Why do Anglicans baptize infants?

Because it is a sign of God’s promise that they are embraced in the covenant community of Christ’s

Church. Those who in faith and repentance present infants to be baptized vow to raise them in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, with the expectation that they will one day profess full Christian faith as their own. (Deuteronomy 6:6—9; Proverbs 22:6; Mark 2:3—5; Acts 2:39; 16:25—34)

110. What signs of the Holy Spirit's work should you hope and pray to see as a result of your Baptism?

I should hope and pray that the Holy Spirit, who indwells me, will help me to be an active member of my Christian community, participate in worship, continually repent and return to God, proclaim the faith, love and serve God and my neighbor, and seek justice and peace. (Matthew 22:35—40; Hebrews 10:19—28; 12:14; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 John 1:9; 2:1)

HOLY COMMUNION

111. Why did Christ institute the sacrament of Holy Communion?

He instituted it for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of his atoning death, and to convey the benefits of that sacrifice to us. (Exodus 24:1—10; Psalm 23:5—6; Luke 22:17—20; John 6:25—51; 1 Corinthians 10:16—17)

112. What is the outward and visible sign in Holy Communion?

The visible sign is bread and wine, which Christ commands us to receive. (1 Corinthians 11:23—26)

113. What is the inward gift signified?

The inward gift signified is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are truly taken and received in the Lord's Supper by faith. (Deuteronomy 8:1—20; Psalm 78:17—29; John 6:52—56; 1 Corinthians 10:1—4, 16—18)

114. What benefits do you receive through partaking of this sacrament?

As my body is nourished by the bread and wine, my soul is strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ. I receive God's forgiveness, and I am renewed in the love and unity of the Body of Christ, the Church. (1662 Catechism; Psalms 28:6—9; 104:14—15; Jeremiah 31:31—34; John 6:52—56; 17:22—24; Revelation 19:6—9)

115. What is required of you when you come to receive Holy Communion?

I am to examine myself: Do I truly repent of my sins and intend to lead a new life in Christ? Do I have a living faith in God's mercy through Christ and remember his atoning death with a thankful heart? And have I shown love and forgiveness to all people? (Leviticus 10:1—5; Psalm 50; 1 Corinthians 11:27—32)

116. What is expected of you after partaking in Holy Communion?

I should continue to grow in holiness, avoiding sin, showing love and forgiveness to all, and serving others in gratitude. (Leviticus 20:26; 1 Corinthians 10:14—32; 1 Peter 4:1—11)

A Historic Prayer for the Church

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (Fifth Century Collect, Book of Common Prayer 2019)

J. I. Packer and Joel Scandrett, eds., *To Be a Christian: An Anglican Catechism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 30—63.

Keep a
close
watch on
yourself
and on
the
teaching.
Persist
in this,
for by so
doing
you will
save
both
yourself
and your
hearers.