

# We Believe

*Exploring the core beliefs of our Christian faith.*



GRACE COMMUNION  
INTERNATIONAL

Youth Edition

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## Youth Edition

*This Youth Edition of “We Believe” is designed for adults to use in teaching younger teens and older children the core beliefs of our Christian faith. One or more passages of Scripture are provided for each question-answer pair, and one of these passages should be memorized by the students. Note that these passages are given to illustrate, not prove the answers given.*

### **Question 1: Who is the God we worship?**

We worship the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The three Persons of the Trinity are one God: one in being, power and glory.

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)*

### **Question 2: Who are you?**

Because of God’s eternal Son Jesus, I belong to God. He created me and has made me his child.

*[God] chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will. (Ephesians 1:2-5)*

### **Question 3: What makes you a child of God?**

Grace: God’s gift of love that I do not deserve and cannot earn.

*By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)*

### **Question 4: What does it mean to be a child of God?**

That God has made me a part of his eternal family and given me a good purpose for my life.

*We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)*

### **Question 5: Don't you have to be good for God to love you?**

No. God loves me even though I do wrong things. God will continue loving me while he works to make me good and loveable like Jesus.

*Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:4-5)*

### **Question 6: How do you thank God for his gift of love?**

By loving and trusting God with all that I am and all that I have.

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

### **Question 7: How do you love God?**

By worshipping God, by loving others and by respecting what God has created.

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:9-10)*

### **Question 8: What did God create?**

God created all that is, both seen and unseen.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)*

### **Question 9: What is special about human beings?**

God created humankind according to his image, both male and female.

*God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:27)*

### **Question 10: What does it mean that we were created according to God's image?**

That God created us to receive and reflect the goodness, wisdom and love seen in Jesus.

*And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Colossians 3:10)*

### **Question 11: Why, then, do human beings often act in destructive and hateful ways?**

Wanting our own way, we turned from God, putting us under sin's power. As a result, it is hard for us to resist the temptation to sin.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

### **Question 12: What is sin?**

Sin is the failure to trust in and obey God. To sin is to ignore God and turn away from his good purposes for us. We sin when, thinking we know best, we pridefully go our own way. Included in the acts that the Bible identifies as sin are idolatry, murder, adultery, stealing, lying and coveting what does not belong to us.

*The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)*

*Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Romans 3:23)*

**Question 13: What are the results of sin in our lives now?**

Our relationships with God and people are damaged and broken. Because of sin, it is far more difficult for us to love others, and we are more easily deceived about what is good and evil.

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. (Colossians 1:21)*

**Question 14: What is the ultimate result of sin?**

Sin separates us from God's eternal family, destroys life and brings pain, suffering and death.

*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)*

*God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (James 1:13-15)*

**Question 15: How does God deal with us as sinners?**

Since God is for us, he is against everything that is against us. God never stops loving us, but because he hates sin, he works to set us free from our sins and to restore us to his eternal family.

*Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)*

**Question 16: What has God done to set us free from sin?**

Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God made a way for us to be delivered from sin's power, and to receive eternal life with God as his beloved children.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

**Question 17: How did God accomplish his plan to deliver us?**

God began his plan to deliver us from sin when our first human parents, Adam and Eve, rebelled against God. His plan included a covenant with Abraham, which was extended to the people of Israel, who descended from Abraham. God then sent Jesus, one of the people of Israel, to be the Savior of all people.

*Death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! (Romans 5:14-15)*

**Question 18: What is the covenant that God made with Abraham and Israel?**

It is the everlasting promise that God gave his people to be their God and to bless all people on earth through them.

*The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name*

*great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. (Genesis 12:1-3)*

**Question 19: How did God keep the covenant with the people of Israel?**

God delivered Israel out of slavery in Egypt, gave them his law, then led them into the Promised Land.

*I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. (Exodus 6:6-7)*

**Question 20: What is the main point of the law that God gave to Israel?**

That they would love God with all their heart, soul and strength, and their neighbor as themselves.

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. (Deuteronomy 6:5)*

*Love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:18)*

**Question 21: Did the people of Israel keep the covenant with God?**

Though some remained faithful, most worshiped other gods and did not love each other as God commanded. They showed us how much we all disobey God and need God's grace.

*Our ancestors refused to obey [God]. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. (Acts 7:39)*

**Question 22: What did God do to bring the people of Israel back to the covenant?**

God sent them prophets to speak God's word, gave them priests to make sacrifices for their sins, and gave them kings to protect them. Most importantly, God promised to send them the Messiah and the Holy Spirit to give them renewed life.

*I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 11:19)*

**Question 23: Who was sent to be the Messiah?**

God the Father sent his eternal Son, Jesus, to be the Messiah ("Christ," meaning "anointed one"). God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit to be the Savior of the world who would deliver all people from sin and death and give them new hearts turned towards God.

*But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. (Galatians 4:4-5)*

*This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:9-10)*

**Question 24: How did God keep the covenant by sending Jesus?**

Through Jesus, God opened the benefits of the covenant promises to all people. Anyone who puts their trust in Jesus receives the blessings of the covenant.

*For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”*  
(Romans 10:10-11)

### **Question 25: How was Jesus able to accomplish this?**

Jesus is our Savior because of who he is and because of what he has done for us.

*You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation.* (Revelation 5:9)

*For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.*  
(1 Timothy 2:5)

### **Question 26: Who is Jesus?**

Jesus is the eternal Son of God. Without ceasing to be God, he also became human like us, with a human nature and a human body. Jesus is God’s gift of grace to us.

*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.* (John 1:14)

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* (Philippians 2:5-11)

### **Question 27: Is Jesus just another human being?**

No. Jesus is fully God and fully human. As “Immanuel” (meaning “God with us”), Jesus is God just as the Father and the Holy Spirit are God. Jesus is also human, just as we are.

*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means “God with us”).* (Matthew 1:23)

### **Question 28: What has Jesus done for us?**

One with God and one with us, Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves. He remade the human heart, mind and will, saved us from evil, and made a way for us to be a part of God’s eternal family as God’s beloved child. Jesus shared with us his eternal knowledge of God. He brings to us God’s forgiveness for our sins. He became our Lord and Savior.

*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.* (Mark 10:45)

*God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*  
(Romans 5:8)

### **Question 29: How did Jesus become our Lord and Savior?**

Jesus became our Lord and Savior by perfectly trusting in and obeying God the Father, all the way to giving his life for us on the cross. Jesus conquered death through his resurrection and overcame all evil that would separate us from God. He forgave us our sins and sent the promised Holy Spirit to be with all who repent of their sin and believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

*[Jesus Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:14)*

*Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father. (Galatians 1:3-4)*

### **Question 30: What was Jesus' life of trusting obedience like?**

Jesus lived on earth in a way that showed us exactly what God is like. As God's only Son, he perfectly received God's love, then perfectly responded by trusting, loving and worshiping God and by loving others with God's love. He was a good shepherd who cares for the sheep.

*"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34)*

*Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves." (John 14:8-11)*

### **Question 31: What did Jesus teach about himself?**

He proclaimed that he and the Father were one and that everyone should believe that the Father sent him to be the Lord and Savior of all people. He taught that through him God was bringing his kingdom to earth. He declared that only he can truly reveal God to us and only through him can we receive God's forgiveness and be saved from sin, death and the power of evil.

*All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. (Matthew 11:27)*

*"What must we do to do the works God requires?" Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." (John 6:28-29)*

*I and the Father are one. (John 10:30)*

### **Question 32: What names did Jesus give us to call him?**

He called himself God's only Son, Messiah, Light of the World, Living Water, Bread of Life, the Resurrection and Life, the Way, the Truth and the Life. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. His name Jesus (meaning "Savior") tells us that he is our salvation.

*Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)*

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)*

### **Question 33: How does Jesus tell us to respond to him?**

He tells us to follow him in worshiping God alone, and to turn away (repent) from trusting in anyone else or in anything else to be our Lord and Savior. He tells us to believe that he alone can conquer death and evil, forgive our sins, give us peace with God, and give us eternal life as a child of God.

*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.* (John 14:1)

*Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.* (John 5:24)

### **Question 34: What did Jesus teach about God?**

That there is one God who as Father, Son and Holy Spirit exists in a relationship of perfect unity and holy love. Jesus taught that God is good, generous, loving and faithful. He taught that God cares about all his creation, including all people, and can be known and trusted. He taught that God is opposed to all evil and will bring it to an end and rescue from it all who turn to him for salvation.

*“Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.”* (Mark 10:18)

*This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.* (1 John 1:5)

### **Question 35: What did Jesus teach about us?**

That we were created to worship, honor and love God. Jesus taught that all human beings need to be forgiven, delivered from evil and made ready for eternal life as a child of God.

*Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”* (Mark 2:17)

*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.* (1 John 1:3)

### **Question 36: What did Jesus teach about the kind of relationship God wants with us?**

That God loves us with the same love that the Father loves Jesus. Jesus taught that human beings were saved to live eternally in a trusting relationship of obedient love with God as our heavenly Father and Jesus as our older brother and his Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

*Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.”* (John 14:23)

*[Father,] I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.* (John 17:22-23)

### **Question 37: How does a right relationship with God affect us?**

It brings to us God’s gifts of faith, hope and love. As we, in faith, receive and enjoy God’s unconditional love for us, we are made whole and given the ability to share his love with others. As we trust in God, we are given a sure hope for eternal life with God, knowing that, in the end, God will make all things right.

*And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.* (1 Corinthians 13:13)



*Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:21)*

**Question 38: What are some of the common lies told about the kind of relationship that God wants with us?**

That we must earn or deserve God's forgiveness and love. That we must bargain with God to get his blessings. That we can overcome evil and death through our own efforts.

*I know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. (Galatians 2:16)*

*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die." (John 11:25-26)*

**Question 39: How did Jesus help people recognize who he was and what he came to do?**

He taught God's truth with authority and acted with God's transforming power. Jesus fed the hungry, healed the sick, blessed children, cared for outcasts, called people to repent and forgave their sins. He preached the good news of God's grace and gave everyone hope for a new life in the kingdom of God.

*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power... [Jesus] went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Acts 10:38)*

**Question 40: How did Jesus prove he is our Savior?**

Through his words and deeds, Jesus proved that he was Prophet, Priest, and King—God's Messiah. He worked many miracles that indicated he was God's only eternal Son. But most importantly, Jesus freely gave his life for us by dying on the cross that we might have life in him. Through his suffering and sacrifice, he showed us that he will not allow anything to separate us from the love of God.

*For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! (Romans 5:10)*

*Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)*

**Question 41: How do we know that Jesus is Lord and Savior?**

In rising from the dead, Jesus demonstrated God's power over evil and death. By appearing to his disciples after his resurrection, Jesus revealed himself as our living Lord and Savior. Through the Bible and by his Spirit, Jesus continues to reveal himself to us today that we might know him, trust in him and live for him.

*After his suffering, [Jesus] presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3)*

### **Question 42: What does it mean that Jesus ascended into heaven?**

After his work on earth was done, Jesus returned to heaven to prepare a place for us to be with him and to rule with God forever. He will come again to earth in glory and remains with us now through the Holy Spirit.

*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. (John 14:3)*

*If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. (John 14:15-17)*

### **Question 43: What happened first on the day of Pentecost?**

With the sound of a mighty wind from heaven, the Holy Spirit filled the house where the apostles and others were gathered. The Spirit came to rest upon each of them, like tongues of fire, and filled them. By the Spirit, they spoke in different languages.

*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. (Acts 2:1-3)*

### **Question 44: What happened next on the day of Pentecost?**

The Holy Spirit drew together an international group of people who had come to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel. The apostles and disciples who were with them went out among that group and told them in their own languages about the mighty deeds God did through Jesus Christ, now resurrected from the dead. Peter preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to them and about 3000 repented and believed in Jesus and received the Holy Spirit.

*Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. (Acts 2:5-6)*

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Acts 2:37-41)*

### **Question 45: What is the gospel of Jesus Christ?**

It is the good news about Jesus and what God accomplished in and through him by the Holy Spirit. The gospel promises us forgiveness of our sins, peace with God, the healing of our hearts so that we can trust and hope in God, and the gift of eternal life. All this is what we mean by God’s salvation.

*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)*

**Question 46: What were the results of Pentecost?**

The Holy Spirit revealed the truth about God and what Jesus, the Son of God, had done for us. The Holy Spirit filled the first Christians with joy, inspired them to understand and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to live a new life together in thanksgiving to God.

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)*

**Question 47: How do these results continue today?**

The Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds to understand and believe in Jesus and his gospel. The Spirit frees us to live in close relationship with God and have our hearts and minds healed and renewed. The Spirit unites us to Jesus, making us members of a new community called the church.

*For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Corinthians 12:13)*

**Question 48: What is the church?**

The church is made up of all who believe the good news about Jesus. In accordance with Jesus' instructions, believers are normally baptized and share in the Lord's Supper. Through these means of grace, the Holy Spirit renews Christians so that we may serve God in love and serve others as God's representatives.

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)*

**Question 49: What comfort does the gospel of Jesus Christ give to you?**

That I belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for my sake, so that nothing will ever separate me from God's love.

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)*

**Question 50: How do we know this good news?**

Through reading the Bible and hearing it taught at home and in church. The Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible and helps us understand and rely on its promises and live by its wisdom and instructions today.

*I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:11-12)*

### **Question 51: What else does the Holy Spirit do for the church?**

The Holy Spirit gathers us to worship God and enables us to understand the written word of God, the Bible. The Spirit builds us up in faith, hope and love, and frees us to obey God's Word. The Spirit sends us into the world to proclaim the gospel and to help others join in as followers of Jesus. The Spirit enables us to find ways to show God's concern for justice and peace in our homes, work places, communities, and among the nations.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)*

### **Question 52: Why do we come together as the church for worship?**

To adore and praise God together. We do so by praying, singing hymns and listening to readings from the Bible. We also give offerings to God for the work of the church, and we commit ourselves to living as faithful representatives of Jesus Christ and serving our neighbors in ways that point them to God. Above all, we gather to hear the gospel preached and to celebrate the sacraments.

*Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:16-17)*

### **Question 53: What is a sacrament?**

Jesus gave us two sacraments—baptism and the Lord's Supper. In these sacraments, by his Word and Spirit, God uses visible signs as special ways for us to receive and benefit from his grace. We celebrate these sacraments as a special part of our worship.

*The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)*

### **Question 54: What is baptism?**

Through baptism I am welcomed into God's family. In the water of baptism, I share in Jesus' baptism for me. Baptism in water tells of the death and resurrection of Jesus, who washes away my sins and gives me eternal life. In baptism, we celebrate our oneness with Jesus, our Living Water, and with all who are joined to him in his body, the church.

*Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:3-5)*

### **Question 55: Why are we baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit?**

Jesus commanded us to baptize in the name of the one God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)*

### **Question 56: What is the meaning of this name?**

It is the name of the triune God who, though one in Being, is three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God's one Being is a communion of loving, knowing and glorifying shared by the three Persons of the Holy Trinity for all eternity. This Name tells us that there is deep mystery to God which, though beyond our full understanding, leads us to worship, wonder and awe.

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)*

### **Question 57: What is the Lord's Supper?**

Jesus first served the Lord's Supper (also called Communion and the Eucharist) to his disciples on the evening before he was crucified. He used the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper to represent the gift of his body and blood that he gave for us. On the cross, his body was broken for us and his life-blood poured out for us.

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28)*

### **Question 58: Why do we celebrate the Lord's Supper?**

We celebrate it to receive from Jesus all that he has to give us. In the Lord's Supper, we are fed at the table of God's family, and our faith is renewed as Jesus continues to share with us the gift of his eternal life. As we remember with thanksgiving that he died for all, we draw comfort and strength from him deep into our hearts and minds.

*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)*

### **Question 59: Why do we pray to God?**

Because we were created to live in close relationship with God, who wants to hear from us, his children. Our hearts long for God, for we need God's presence, help and guidance every day.

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)*

**Question 60: What do we do in prayer?**

We adore God for who he is. We offer to God our thanksgiving for all his good gifts. We entrust to God our deepest hopes and fears, questions and concerns, longings and disappointments. We entrust to God the confession of our sins, trusting in his forgiveness and transformation. We entrust to God our requests for help, both for ourselves and for others.

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)*

**Question 61: What if we don't know how to pray or what to pray about?**

When we pray, we join Jesus in his prayers for us. Jesus is always praying *with us*. When we are praying, the Spirit will move *in us* to pray. And if we can't find words, the Spirit will pray *for us* without words, or with words beyond our understanding. We never pray alone.

*The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)*

**Question 62: How did Jesus teach us to pray?**

Jesus gave us this prayer (called the Lord's Prayer) for us to pray together:

*Our Father in heaven. Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:9-13, NKJV)*

**Question 63: What do we mean when we pray to God as "our Father"?**

We call on God like little children who know that God cares for them and loves them. Because Jesus prayed to God as his Father, we too can pray to God in this way.

*In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. (John 16:26-27)*

**Question 64: When we pray to God as our Father, do we mean that God is male?**

No. Only creatures who have bodies can be male or female. But God is spirit and has no body.

*God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)*

**Question 65: What do we mean when we pray to God "in heaven"?**

We mean that God draws near to us from beyond this world and hears our prayers.

*If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:11)*  
*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. (1 John 5:14)*

**Question 66: What do we ask when we pray "hallowed be your name"?**

We pray that God's name will be honored in all the world and everywhere treated as holy, because God's name stands for God.

*Let them praise your great and awesome name—he is holy. (Psalm 99:3)*

**Question 67: What do we ask when we pray "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?**

We ask God to fulfill his purpose for the whole world. We also ask God to make us able and willing to accept God's good and right will in all things, and to do our part in bringing about God's purpose.

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)*

**Question 68: Why do we pray "give us this day our daily bread"?**

Because all good things come from God. Even in our most ordinary needs, God cares for us completely, each day.

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

**Question 69: What do we ask when we pray "forgive us our debts"?**

We are telling God that we are sorry for something wrong we have done or said or thought. We ask God not to hold our sins against us, but to accept us again by his grace. We ask him to continue to work in our lives and trust him to make things right in the end.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:9-10)*

**Question 70: Why do we continue with "as we forgive our debtors"?**

Because we are to forgive others, just as God has forgiven us. We pass on the forgiveness we receive from God to others who sin against us.

*As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:12-13)*

**Question 71: What do we ask when we pray "and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"?**

We are praying according to what God wants to do for us. So, we ask God to protect us, especially when we most need it. We pray for God to free us from all desires that would lead us to sin, and to shelter us from the powers of evil that may threaten us or deceive us and lead us astray.

*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)*

**Question 72: What does it mean to pray "for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever"?**

With this phrase, which became part of the Lord's Prayer in the early church, we praise God for being able and willing to do everything we have asked in this prayer. We give ourselves over to God's wise and gracious rule, because we know that God can be trusted to make all things work together for good, both now and forever. We look forward in hope to the day when God's perfect will and ways will be done throughout all his creation.

*We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)*

**Question 73: Why does our prayer end with "Amen"?**

"Amen" means "let it be so." It expresses our complete confidence in God, who makes no promise that will not be kept and whose love endures forever.

*For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20)*

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