

Instruction In The Westminster Standards

The Historic Standards of Presbyterian Denominations.

STUDIES IN THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

- Q. 43. What is the preface to the ten commandments?
- A. The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
- Q. 44. What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?
- A. The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.
- Scripture References:** Exod. 20:2. Luke 1:74. I Pet. 1:15-19.

Questions:

1. What three things are found in the preface to motivate us to holy living?
The three motivators are: (1) He is our Lord. (2) He is our God. (3) He is our Redeemer.
- 2. Why should we keep His commandments because He is our Lord?
We should keep His commandments because He is our Lord since He is our Creator and our Sovereign and as His creatures and subjects we owe Him this. Ps. 100:2,3.
3. Why should we keep His commandments because He is our God?
We should keep His commandments because He is our God since He is our Covenant God and has brought us into a special relationship with Himself and therefore we have an obligation to serve Him.
4. Why should we keep His commandments because He is our Redeemer?
We should keep His commandments because He is our Redeemer since He bought us and made us free from sin and this should encourage us to be obedient unto Him.
5. What wonderful lessons can be learned from the grammatical construction used in this question?
The lesson that He is the Lord our God in the present time, not in the future; the lesson that He is the Lord God of every individual sinner ("Thy") whom He calls.
- 6. From what bondage are we delivered by the Lord our God?
We are delivered from the bondage of being under the wrath of God and the guilt, power and pollution of sin, from hell itself. This should teach us to keep His commandments out of praise to Him for what He has done for us and out of the sense that this is the least we can do to repay Him. (Phil. 1:27)

OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE

By Israel's deliverance from the house of bondage typifies the spiritual deliverance of the believer from sin, Satan and hell. Our spiritual deliverance is a wondrous thing, a mercy for which we should ever be praising God. The question is pertinent: Why don't we praise Him more for such a deliverance? Why aren't our lives a ceaseless hymn of praise to our God who is our Deliverer?

This deliverance is something the Christain takes for granted time and time again. There does not seem to be a realization of what He has done for us in this regard. We sing:

"In loving kindness Jesus came My soul in mercy to reclaim,
And from the depths of sin and shame Thro' grace He lifted me.
From sinking sand He lifted me, With tender hand He lifted me,
From shades of night to plains of light, Oh, praise His name, He
lifted me!"

And yet though we sing it we do not realize all that is involved. We say we do, we can give the right answers under theological examination, but our manner of life so many times shows a lack of appreciation for our deliverance.

There might be help for us in this matter if we should realize once again from what we have been delivered. Let us think of the sinner for a moment. He is a man who is in bondage to sin. He is an absolute slave to his own sinful will. Sin reigns over him and there is nothing he can do about it. He is a man that is under the command of Satan. He rules the mind of the sinner and there is nothing the sinner can do about it for he is in ignorance. He rules the sinner's will and since he does the sinner will obey him in each situation. Satan leads him into snares he sets for him, every step has at its end a Satanic mine that cannot be missed and will always destroy. He is a man who is on his way to hell, to everlasting torment. There is no worse way to describe misery, to paint a picture of it, than to use the term hell. The worst mire of life is easy compared to the terrible punishments of hell. From such a bondage is the redeemed man delivered by grace.

How is it possible for us not to praise our Lord God for such a deliverance? How can we help but bend every effort to thank Him for this wonderful grace? Nothing should stop us from magnifying the precious name of Jesus by giving Him the preeminence in all that we do, say and think, all to the glory of God. (Ps. 111:1)

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