

Westminster Confession of Faith Study Questions

Adapted from John R. Hilbelink in [Ordained Servant 2:1](#)

I. Of the Holy Scriptures

1. In what two ways does God reveal himself, and why is only one of them sufficient for salvation? (I, 1).
2. How many books are there in the Old Testament? The New Testament? (I, 2).
3. Of what use are the books called the “Apocrypha”? (I, 3).
4. On what does the authority of the Scripture depend, and on what does it not depend? (I, 4).
5. In view of the various evidences that the Bible is God’s Word, what is necessary for our full persuasion and assurance? (I, 5).
6. What is meant by the phrase “good and necessary consequence”? (I, 6).
7. How easy is the Scripture to understand? (I, 7).
8. In what languages was the Scripture written, and why should we translate the Bible into our own language? (I, 8).
9. Who is the only infallible interpreter of the Scripture? (I, 9).
10. Who is “the supreme judge” for all controversies of religion? (I, 10).

II. Of God and of the Holy Trinity

1. What are God’s attributes? (II, 1).
2. Describe God in relationship to his creation (II, 2).
3. What are the three persons of the Godhead, and how are they related to one another? (II, 3).

III. Of God’s Eternal Decree

1. If God ordains whatever comes to pass, what must we believe concerning our responsibility and freedom? (III, 1).
2. If God decreed to do something because he saw beforehand what would happen, what effect might this have on his sovereignty? (III, 2).
3. What has God decreed for all men? (III, 3).
4. How certain is God’s predestination and foreordination? (III, 4).
5. What is predestination unto life? (III, 5).
6. What in the Christian’s present life is affected by God’s predestination unto life? (III, 6).
7. What is the purpose of God’s ordaining some to dishonor? (III, 7).
8. How should we handle the doctrine of predestination, and how do we benefit from studying God’s decrees? (III, 8).

IV. Of Creation

1. What is God’s work of creation? (IV, 1).

2. What distinguishes the creation of man? (IV, 2).

V. Of Providence

1. What four words describe God's works of providence? (V, 1).
2. If God is "the first Cause," what is meant by the phrase "second causes"? (V, 2).
3. Give an example of what is described in section 3 (V, 3).
4. What is the relationship of God's providence to the fall of man and to sin? (V, 4).
5. Why does God allow us to suffer the sinfulness and miseries of this life? (V, 5).
6. How does God deal with "wicked and ungodly men"? (V, 6).
7. Who is the greatest beneficiary of God's providence? (V, 7).

VI. Of the Fall of Man, of Sin and of the Punishment Thereof

1. What was the first sin, and what was God's relationship to it? (VI, 1).
2. What was the result of the first sin? (VI, 2).
3. How does the Fall affect all others? (VI, 3).
4. Why do we sin? (VI, 4).
5. Do Christians sin? (VI, 5).
6. What is meant by "original" and "actual" sin, and what consequences do they bring on us? (VI, 6).

VII. Of God's Covenant With Man

1. Why is it necessary that God come to us to save us? (VII, 1).
2. What is the "covenant of works," and with whom was it made? (VII, 2).
3. What is the "covenant of grace," and with whom was it made? (VII, 3).
4. How is the covenant also a "testament"? (VII, 4).
5. How was the covenant of grace administered in the Old Testament? (VII, 5).
6. How is the covenant of grace administered in the New Testament? (VII, 6).

VIII. Of Christ the Mediator

1. What did God send Jesus to be for us? (VIII, 1).
2. What are the "distinct natures" of Christ, and how are they related to each other? (VIII, 2).
3. How are the Father and the Holy Spirit involved in the ministry of Christ? (VIII, 3).
4. Describe the humiliation of Christ (VIII, 4).
5. What was accomplished by Christ's perfect obedience and sacrifice? (VIII, 5).
6. How does Christ's work relate to the believers of the Old Testament? (VIII, 6).
7. Describe further how the "distinct natures" of Christ are related to each other (VIII, 7).
8. How does Christ serve as our mediator now? (VIII, 8).

IX. Of Free Will

1. Describe the "natural liberty" God has given to us (IX, 1).
2. What liberty did Adam and Eve enjoy in the garden? (IX, 2).
3. Describe man's liberty after the Fall (IX, 3).
4. What liberty do we have as Christians? (IX, 4).
5. Describe the liberty possessed by the saints in heaven (IX, 5).

X. Of Effectual Calling

1. Whom does God effectually call, and what changes occur in those he effectually calls? (X, 1).
2. What part does man have in his effectual calling, and what part does God have? (X, 2).
3. What does the Confession say about those who cannot hear the gospel, such as “elect infants, dying in infancy”? (X, 3).
4. How good must “others, not elected” be to be saved? (X, 4).

XI. Of Justification

1. Describe four false views of justification and the answer to each (XI, 1).
2. Describe the faith that justifies (XI, 2).
3. Describe the extent of Christ’s payment for our justification (XI, 3).
4. When was our justification decreed, accomplished, and applied? (XI, 4).
5. What must one who is justified by faith do when he sins? (XI, 5).
6. How does the justification of believers under the Old Testament compare to that of believers under the New Testament? (XI, 6).

XII. Of Adoption

1. What privileges are enjoyed by those who are made partakers of the grace of adoption? (XII, 1).

XIII. Of Sanctification

1. What changes take place in the lives of those who are sanctified, and by what power do these changes take place? (XIII, 1).
2. What is the extent of God’s sanctifying work in our lives? (XIII, 2).
3. Describe the “continual and irreconcilable war” in the lives of those who are sanctified? (XIII, 2, 3).

XIV. Of Saving Faith

1. What is “the grace of faith,” and how do we receive it? (XI, 1).
2. What are “the principal acts of saving faith”? (XI, 2).
3. How are faith and assurance related? (XI, 3).

XV. Of Repentance unto Life

1. What must always accompany the preaching of repentance? (XV, 1).
2. Describe repentance unto life (XV, 2).
3. Why is repentance necessary? (XV, 3).
4. Is there any sin too great for true repentance? (XV, 4).
5. How specific should we be in repentance? (XV, 5).
6. Under what circumstances should there be a private or public confession of sin? (XV, 6).

XVI. Of Good Works

1. What is, and what is not, a “good work”? (XVI, 1).
2. What is the purpose of good works? (XVI, 2).
3. How are the grace of God and our diligence related to our doing good works? (XVI, 3).
4. How close can we get to perfection in this life? (XVI, 4).
5. Why can't we earn salvation by our good works? (XVI, 5).
6. Why then does God look upon our works as good? (XVI, 6).
7. Describe the “works done by unregenerate men” (XVI, 7).

XVII. Of the Perseverance of the Saints

1. What does God's effectual calling and sanctification accomplish in us? (XVII, 1).
2. On what does our perseverance depend? (XVII, 2).
3. What may happen to those who are called and sanctified? (XVII, 3).

XVIII. Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation

1. Who may enjoy assurance of salvation? (XVIII, 1).
2. On what is the certainty of our faith founded? (XVIII, 2).
3. How are faith and assurance related? (XVIII, 3).
4. To what extent may our assurance be shaken? (XVIII, 4).

XIX. Of the Law of God

1. Describe the law which God gave to Adam as a covenant of works (XIX, 1, 2).
2. How are the ten commandments divided? (XIX, 2).
3. What is the moral law, and what are meant by the ceremonial laws? (XIX, 3).
4. What other laws did God give to his people under Moses, and what do you think is meant by the phrase “further than the general equity thereof may require”? (XIX, 4).
5. How binding is the moral law? (XIX, 5).
6. In what way is the law of great use to believers? (XIX, 6).
7. How is the law related to grace? (XIX, 7).

XX. Of Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience

1. What is meant by Christian liberty? (XX, 1).
2. What do you consider to be some ramifications of the phrase “God alone is Lord of the conscience”? (XX, 2).
3. What is the “end” of Christian liberty, and how might it be destroyed? (XX, 3).
4. What is the relationship of Christian liberty to the civil government? (XX, 4).

XXI. Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day

1. Where must we learn how to worship God? (XXI, 1).
2. To whom and through whom is worship to be given? (XXI, 2).
3. How are we to pray? (XXI, 3).
4. For whom and what may we pray? (XXI, 4).
5. What also are parts of the ordinary worship of God? (XXI, 5).
6. How is the place of worship related to our worship today? (XXI, 6).
7. On what day is the Christian sabbath, and why must we continue to remember it? (XXI, 7).
8. How must we keep the sabbath? (XXI, 8).

XXII. Of Lawful Oaths and Vows

1. What is a lawful oath? (XXII, 1).
2. How must an oath be taken? (XXII, 2).
3. To what may a person bind himself by oath? (XXII, 3).
4. What is forbidden in taking oaths? (XXII, 4).
5. How is a vow like an oath? (XXII, 5).
6. To whom is a vow made? (XXII, 6).
7. Under what circumstances is a vow now to be taken? (XXII, 7).

XXIII. Of the Civil Magistrate

1. By whom were civil governments ordained, and for what purpose? (XXIII, 1).
2. To what extent may a Christian be involved in the civil government? (XXIII, 2).
3. How is the civil government to be related to the church? (XXIII, 3).
4. What is our duty to the civil government? (XXIII, 4).

XXIV. Of Marriage and Divorce

1. How many wives or husbands may one have? (XXIV, 1).
2. Why was marriage ordained by God? (XXIV, 2).
3. Who may marry whom? (XXIV, 3).
4. Under what circumstances may people not marry? (XXIV, 3, 4).
5. What are the biblical grounds for divorce? (XXIV, 5, 6).
6. Under what circumstances may a divorced person remarry? (XXIV, 5, 6).

XXV. Of the Church

1. What is the “invisible” church? (XXV, 1).
2. Describe the “visible” church and her importance (XXV, 2).
3. What did Christ give to the visible church and for what purpose? (XXV, 3).
4. How perfect is the catholic visible church? (XXV, 4).
5. Describe the purity and permanence of the church (XXV, 5).
6. Who is the head of the church? (XXV, 6).

XXVI. Of the Communion of Saints

1. Describe our union in Christ and our union to one another (XXVI, 1).
2. What is our duty with regard to the communion of the saints? (XXVI, 2).
3. What is not meant by the communion of saints? (XXVI, 3).

XXVII. Of the Sacraments

1. What is the relationship of the sacraments to the covenant of grace? (XXVII, 1).
2. How are the sign and the thing signified related? (XXVII, 2).
3. Upon what does the grace in the sacrament depend, and upon what does it not depend? (XXVII, 3).
4. What are the sacraments ordained by Christ? (XXVII, 4).
5. How are the sacraments of the Old Testament related to the sacraments of the New Testament? (XXVII, 5).

XXVIII. Of Baptism

1. For what purposes did Christ ordain the sacrament of baptism, and of what is baptism a sign and seal? (XXVIII, 1).
2. What is the outward element, and in whose name is the person baptized? (XXVIII, 2).
3. How is baptism to be administered? (XXVIII, 2, 3).
4. To whom is the sacrament of baptism to be administered? (XXVIII, 4).
5. How urgent is the administration of the sacrament of baptism? (XXVIII, 5, 6).
6. How are grace and salvation related to the sacrament of baptism? (XXVIII, 5, 6).
7. How often must a person be baptized? (XXVIII, 7).

XXIX. Of the Lord's Supper

1. For what purpose did Christ ordain the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (XXIX, 1), and of what is it a sign and seal (1 Cor. 11:25)?
2. How is Christ's death related to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? (XXIX, 2).
3. By whom, to whom, and how is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to be administered? (XXIX, 3).
4. What misuse is to be avoided? (XXIX, 4).
5. What are the outward elements of the Lord's Supper, and how closely related are they to what they represent? (XXIX, 5).
6. What misuse is to be avoided? (XXIX, 6).
7. How is Christ related to those who worthily receive the elements? (XXIX, 7).
8. Who may not receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? (XXIX, 8).

XXX. Of Church Censures

1. By whom is the government of the church established, and to whom is it entrusted? (XXX, 1).
2. What is meant by "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" in relation to the government of the church? (XXX, 2).
3. What are the purposes of church censures? (XXX, 3).
4. How may the officers of the church attain these purposes? (XXX, 4).

XXXI. Of Synods and Councils

1. By whom and for what purposes are synods and councils to be called? (XXXI, 1).
2. What must the synods and councils do to attain these purposes, and how are their decisions to be received by the members of the church? (XXXI, 2).
3. What is the relationship of synods and councils to our faith and practice? (XXXI, 3).
4. What is the relationship of synods and councils to the civil government? (XXXI, 4).

XXXII. Of the State of Men after Death, and of the Resurrection of the Dead

1. What happens to the bodies and souls of men after death? (XXXII, 1).
2. What will happen "at the last day"? (XXXII, 2).
3. What happens to the bodies of the just and unjust at the resurrection? (XXXII, 3).

XXXIII. Of the Last Judgment

1. At the last judgment, who will judge, who will be judged, and what will be taken into account in the judgment? (XXXIII, 1).
 2. What is the purpose of the last judgment, and what will happen to the righteous and the wicked? (XXXIII, 2).
 3. Why is it important that we know that there is a last judgment while not knowing the time it will take place? (XXXIII, 3).
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