

Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) 2020-2021

Women's Thursday Bible Study # 15

Prayer

Topic, doctrine of **the church** (called out ones)

Q. 61 Are all they saved who hear the gospel, and live in the church?

A. All that hear the gospel, and live in the **visible** church are not (necessarily) saved; but they only who are true members of the church **invisible**.

John 12:38-40

Mat. 7:21-23

Rom. 11:7 - the elect are saved

Who knows for certain?

Must an applicant for membership prove to the officers he is born again?

Q. 62 What is the visible church?

A. The visible church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children.

I Cor. 1:2

I Cor. 12 - speaks of their being one body (church) , with many members

Rev. 7:9 - a great multitude from every nation

Ps. 22:27 - the scope of God's praise shall extend , expand - reference to Christ and the nations

Heb. 1:8-9 (Ps. 45: 6-7)

Gen. 17:7 , Acts 2:39 and I Cor. 7:14 - children of believer(s) included in the visible church

What is the badge or sign of entrance into the visible church? What is the highest privilege of membership?

In addition to those who profess the true religion who else is included in the membership of the visible church?

What is the scope of time and place?

Q. 63 What are the special privileges of the visible church?

A. The visible church have the privilege of being under God's special care and government,

- of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies
- Of enjoying the communion of saints,
- the ordinary means of salvation

* and offers of grace by Christ to all members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying, that whosoever believes in Him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come to Him.

Is. 4:5-6 wherever God is spoken of as a shade, refuge - speaking of his protective presence unique to his people

Acts 2: 39, 42, 46-47

Mat. 16:18 the promise of Christ

Rom. 8:28 all things, good

***A history question!** How has Christ's promise been fulfilled in past ages?

Sum: in every age God's special providence has been at work for the benefit of the church.

1. What is meant by saying that the church enjoys " the communion of saints"?
2. What are the " ordinary means of salvation" which the visible church enjoys?
3. Are home and foreign missions the work proper to the visible church? (What about volunteer associations?)
4. SO what is the importance of the visible church? What are the other 2 divine institutions?

Q. 64 What is the invisible church?

A. The invisible church is the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, and shall be gathered into one under Christ the head .

Eph. 1:10, 22-23

John 10:16 one flock, one shepherd

John 11:52-53

John 17:20

Acts 18:9-10 God told Paul to continue preaching in spite of opposition because.....

Only God knows. Rev. 7:9-10

Distinction - the church militant, the church triumphant

Should a believer (member of invisible) seek to be a member of a particular branch, local body of the visible church?

How can drawing a diagram of 2 circles that partly overlap - illustrate the relationship between the invisible and visible church?

Q. 65 What special benefits do the members of the invisible church enjoy by Christ?

A. The members of the invisible church by Christ enjoy Union and communion with Him in grace and glory.

NOTE: Q. 65 is of the nature of a heading or summary of all the questions from 66-90, the end of section I of the LC.)

John 17:21 , Eph. 2:5-6 - in grace,life now on earth

John 17:24 - in glory, life to come !

Q. 66 what is that union which the elect have with Christ?

A. The union which the elect have with Christ is the work of God's grace , whereby they are spiritually and mystically , yet really and inseparably , joined to Christ as their head and husband; which is done in their effectual calling.

Eph. 1:22, 2:6-8

I Cor. 6:17, John 10:28

Eph. 5:23,30 head and husband

I Peter 5:10 and I Cor. 1:9

Why does the LC add the words " yet really and inseparably"?

What 2 **prominent** figures of speech (**metaphors**) in the New Testament are being referred to?

Next week: read and look up the verses regarding Q. 67-73.

Read SC # 31- 33 for a compressed answer.

The topics are particularly effectual calling and justification.