

Westminster Larger Catechism #91

What is the duty which God requires of man?

The duty which God requires of man, is obedience to his revealed will.

Rom. 12:1-2 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

James 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

James 4:17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do we owe a duty to God?
2. What classes of people deny that human beings owe a duty to God?
3. Why is it wrong to say that our highest loyalty should be devotion to the welfare of humanity?
4. Is it not true that serving our fellow men is a noble way of serving God?
5. Do we have a right to choose whether we will obey God's revealed will or not?
6. Why does God not consult our wishes before imposing His will upon us?

Westminster Larger Catechism #92

What did God at first reveal unto man as the rule of his obedience?

The rule of obedience revealed to Adam in the estate of innocence, and to all mankind in him, besides a special command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was the moral law.

Gen. 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Rom. 2:14-15 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. 15 They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

Rom. 10:5 For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

Discussion Questions

1. What do we call the condition of the human race before the fall into sin?
2. What special command did God give to mankind in the estate of innocence?
3. How was this special command of God given to mankind?
4. Apart from this special command, what rule of obedience did God give to mankind?
5. How was the moral law given to mankind in the estate of innocence?
6. Do the people have the moral law of God written on their hearts by God's natural revelation today?
7. Why did God not reveal the Ten Commandments to Adam and Eve?
8. What is the popular "modern" view of the moral law? *The law is not a revelation of the will of God, or an expression of the nature of God. If there is a God, he too is subject to the moral law, which exists above and beyond him. The moral law is a discovery of man.*
9. What errors are involved in this "modern" view of the moral law?

Westminster Larger Catechism #93

What is the moral law?

The moral law is the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience thereunto, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in performance of all those duties of holiness and righteousness which he owes to God and man: promising life upon the fulfilling, and threatening death upon the breach of it.

Luke 10:26-27 *He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" 27 And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."*

Acts 24:16 *So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.*

Gal. 3:10 *For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."*

Discussion Questions

1. How does the catechism define the moral law?
2. Who is subject to the moral law of God?
3. Does the moral law of God bind the heathen who know nothing of the Bible?
4. Does God's moral law bind atheists who do not believe in God?
5. Does the moral law of God bind Christians?
6. Does God's moral law ever change, or is it always the same?
7. Does God's moral law change now, in our own time?
8. What attitude do many modern people take toward the idea that God's moral law is fixed and will remain unalterable till the end of the world? *It is absurd to suppose that detailed commandments given to men 2000 years ago can be adequate for the needs of humanity in this modern age of scientific progress.*
9. How should we answer this objection to the unchangeable character of God's moral law?
10. What kind of obedience does God's moral law require of mankind?
11. Does the moral law of God require us to be good?
12. Is not such a standard far too high for the human race?
13. What kind of duties does God's moral law obligate us to perform?
14. What is the difference between "duties of holiness" and "duties of righteousness"?
15. What is the difference between duties owed to God and duties owed to man?
16. What does God promise upon the fulfilling of His moral law?
17. Can eternal life be obtained in any other way than by the fulfilling of God's moral law?
18. What penalty came upon mankind because of the breach of God's moral law?
19. What is the meaning of "death" as the penalty for breaking the moral law of God?