

From Your Pastors

A Study of the Shorter Catechism

Question: Are there more Gods than one?

Answer: There is but one only, the living and true God.

Scripture memory: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.” – Deut. 6:4; “But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting King.” – Jer. 10:10a

An explanation: There is only one, living and true God. The Scriptures teach us that God is one (Deut. 6:4). The Christian Faith is monotheistic which means that we believe in one God (“mono” = one; “Theos” = God). We confess that this one God is revealed in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but He is One God (the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God).

One purpose of the Bible’s emphasis on the one, true and living God is to instruct and warn sinful man against idolatry and pagan polytheism, or the belief in many gods (1 Cor. 8:4-6; Psalm 96:4-5). The Holy Scriptures teach that the gods of the pagan peoples are “worthless” (they cannot save; they cannot speak because they are often merely dead pieces of wood or metal; they are powerless to help anyone because they are dead and lifeless, Psa. 96:5; Jer. 10:5). Idols have no real existence (1 Cor. 8:4), and therefore we confess:

“...There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist” (1 Cor. 8:6).

Yet fallen man makes idols, and worships and serves false gods, even though the True God has made Himself clearly known (Rom. 1:19-25). Romans 1 teaches us that at the heart of idolatrous unbelief are a refusal to see the evidence of the True God in creation, a warped foolishness in blind unrepentance, and a desire to exchange the truth of God that is revealed for a lie, to ***worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!*** (Rom. 1:25).

As Christians, we should rejoice that God has fully revealed Himself as the One and Only, True and Living God! In God’s merciful kindness, God Himself took upon Himself our nature in the Lord Jesus Christ, to clearly reveal the existence and nature of the One True God. Jesus teaches ***“I and my Father are one”*** and ***“If you have seen me, you have seen the Father”*** (John 10:30; 14:9), and ***“...This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent”*** (John 17:3).

God reveals His lavish love for sinners who will repent and turn from their idolatry to serve the Living God. Christians are described in the Bible in this way: ***“...You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come”*** (1 Thess. 1:9-10).

We must keep ourselves from idols, dearly Beloved. *What we are tempted to live for, serve, dream about, and adore too much will be our temptation to idolatry. Let us love God first above all things in Christ Jesus, and be thankful.* Let us worship and serve Him alone because of the love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness He has offered idolaters, and how He has saved us from His coming wrath upon all disobedience. ***“Little children, keep yourselves from idols”*** (1 John 5:21).

A prayer: Thank you, dear Father, You who are the Only God, the True and Living God, for saving me from idolatry, and your righteous judgment that will fall upon all idolaters (1 Cor. 6:9; Rev. 21:8). Thank you, dear God, for your mercy to me in Jesus Christ, and your unfailing, undying patience with me, even as I live for you, and realize sometimes that I still love created things too much. Grant me a deeper repentance and true mourning for the way I love the things you have given me, more than the fact that you have given yourself to me in Christ! Let my heart find its rest in you alone. Amen.

**In Christ’s love,
Pastors Biggs and Halley**

“Wherever the indwelling Spirit is, He gradually transforms the soul to be holy and gracious like Himself.”

- Richard Sibbes