

Week Three: Private Catechesis

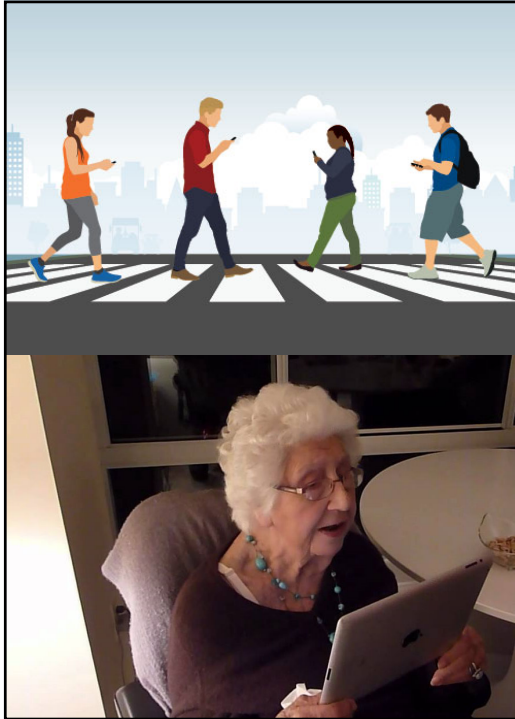
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Private?

- I am defining private as individuals, couples, or families.
- We will discover that incorporating traditional catechism into our Christian formation will enrich our relationship with Christ.
- We will go over three different catechisms this morning.

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Memorization?

- ▶ I've been reading journal articles that argue that technology is remapping our brains.
- ▶ I have noticed some extreme misspellings lately such as my name!
- ▶ Memorization is often looked down upon in education.

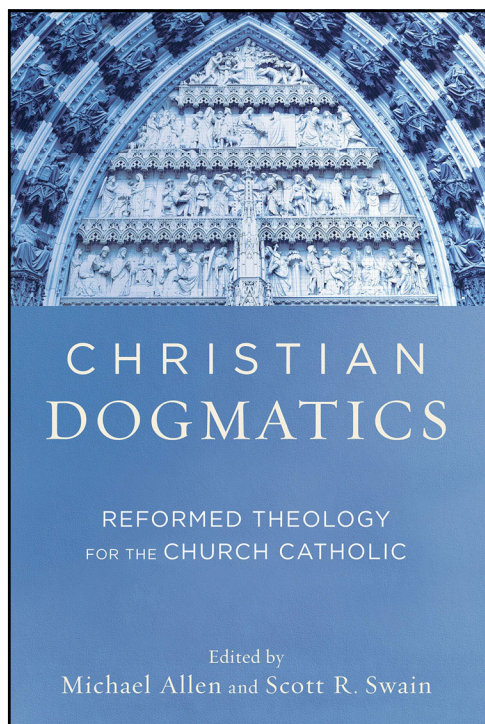
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Age of Distraction

- ▶ In the age of distraction, we need to intentionally unplug and be disciplined.
- ▶ I have been in rooms with college students and not one person is not on their phone.
- ▶ Phones and technology can be a crutch. They even catch spelling mistakes while typing!

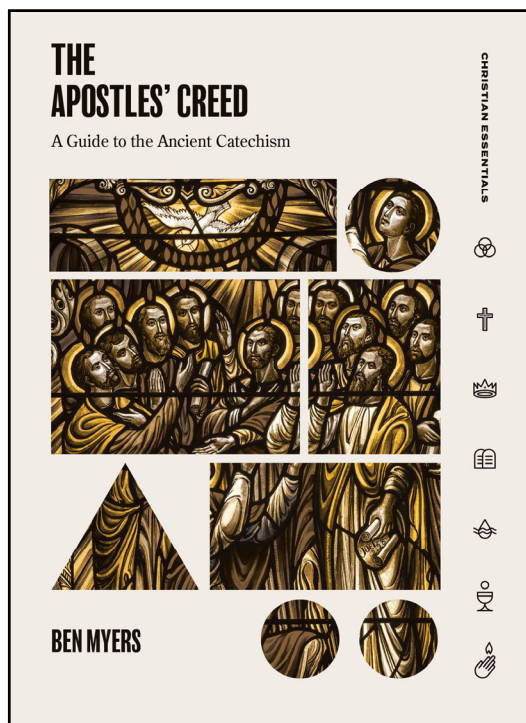
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The Catholic Creeds

- The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are the yardsticks for Trinitarian language.
- The Reformed tradition's affirmation of the creeds affirms its catholicity.
- It has been a habit for Reformed and Presbyterian Christians to memorize the Apostles' Creed.

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Apostles' Creed

- I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church*, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

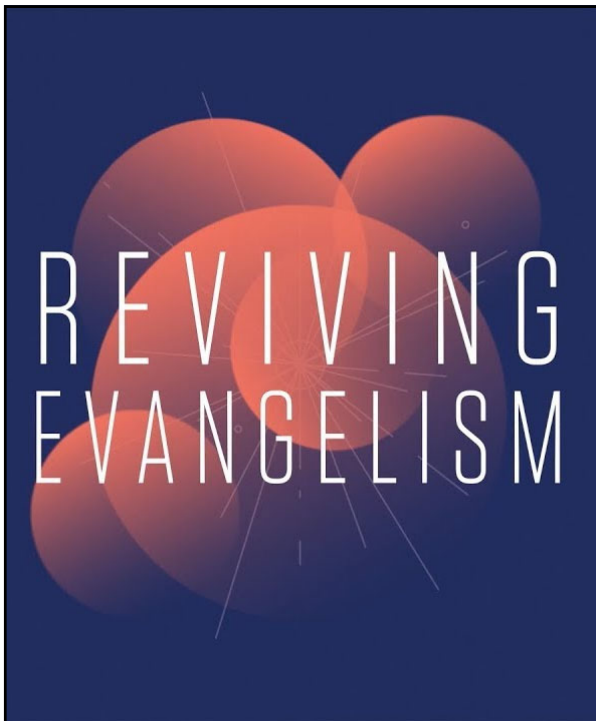
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Memorizing the Apostles' Creed

- ▶ If we have memorized the Apostles' Creed, what was the experience like?
- ▶ Does our new knowledge provide the proper grammar to discuss the Trinity?
- ▶ The Apostles' Creed demonstrates that Trinitarian language isn't as abstract as we think!

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Evangelism and the Apostles' Creed?

- ▶ We do not need to reinvent the wheel whenever we share the gospel with others.
- ▶ Use the resources of your memorizing the Apostles' Creed to help speak about who God is.
- ▶ I have made a commitment to use the Apostles' Creed when sitting down with non-believers as opposed to the newest and coolest evangelism book.

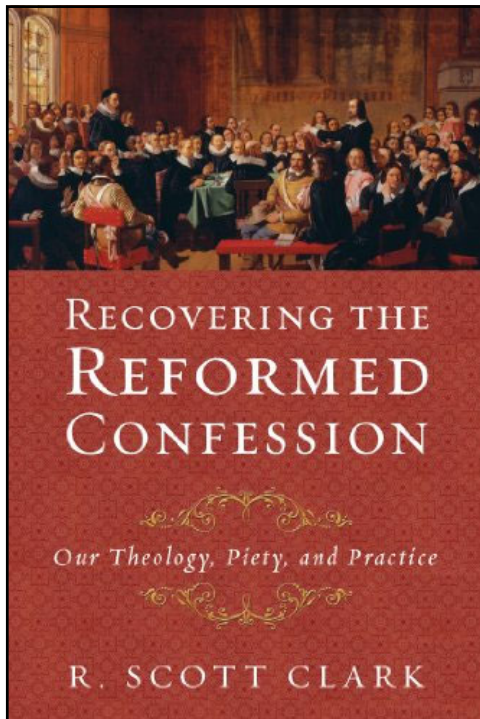
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Reformed Catechism

- The Reformed tradition has several different confessions that can be utilized. We have the continental Reformed tradition and Presbyterianism.
- The continental Reformed produced the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, 2nd Helvetic Confession, and the Canons of Dort.
- The Presbyterian confessions are the Scots Confession, Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Shorter Catechism, and Westminster Longer Catechism.

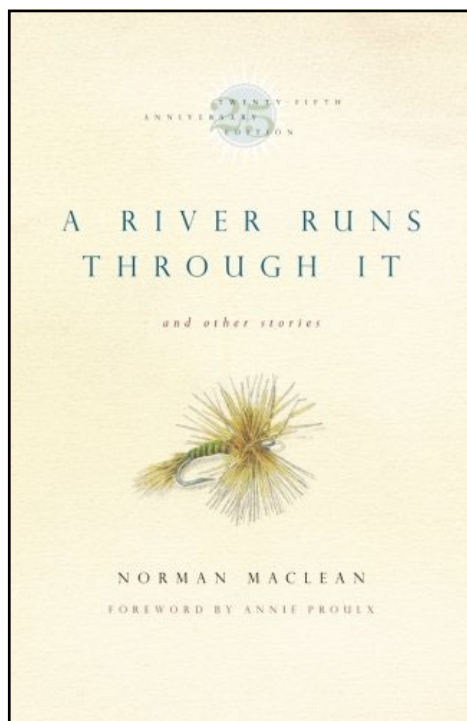
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Continental Tradition

- The continental tradition is broadly reformed.
- The texts feel “warmer” as opposed to the Presbyterian confessions.
- One of the biggest differences between the EPC and the PCUSA is we do not have a book of confessions.

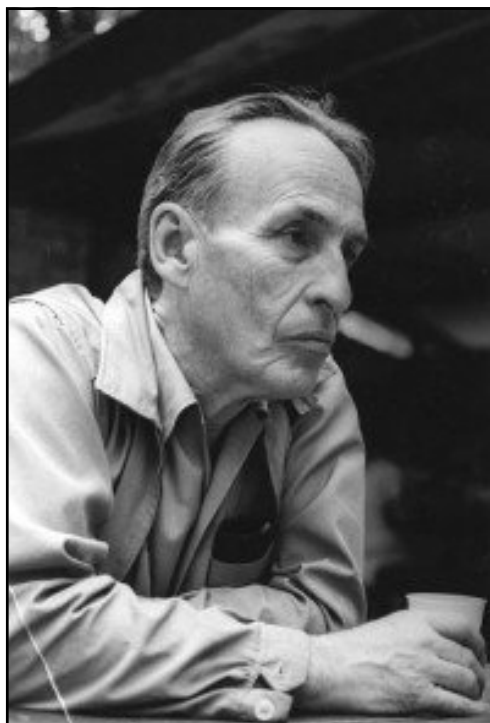
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Westminster Shorter Catechism

- ▶ Q1. What is the chief end of man?
- ▶ A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.

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Westminster Shorter Catechism

- ▶ "In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen, and we were left to assume, as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman." Norman Maclean

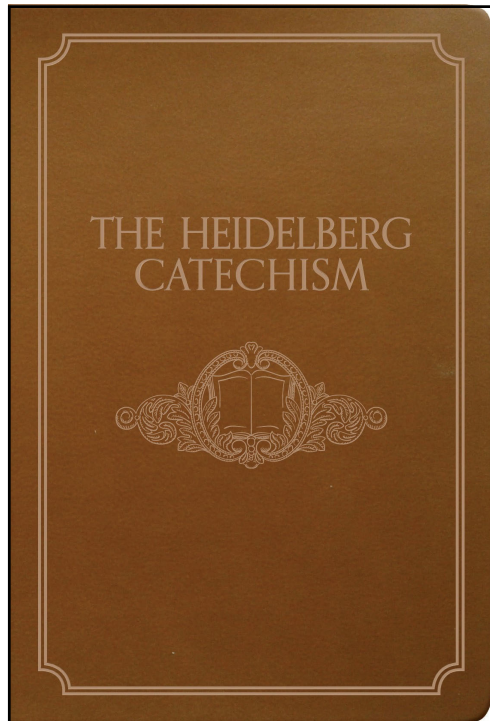
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Heidelberg Catechism (1563) Question

1

- Q: What is your only hope in life and in death?
- A: The I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

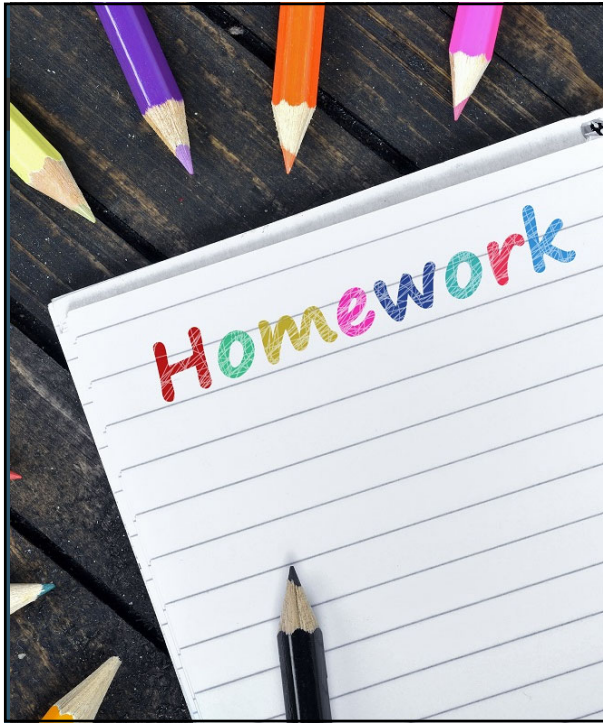
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Heidelberg Catechism (1563) Question 1

- I think this particular question might be the best summary of the Christian life within our tradition.
- It excels at teaching us the doctrine of salvation and the providence of God.
- I plan to have this statement as my call to worship for all funerals in the future.

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Homework

- I will have the Heidelberg Catechism question one posted on Facebook.
- I would ask you memorize the Apostles' Creed, WSC 1, and Heidelberg Catechism question one this week.
- Work on memorization as an individual or with your spouse. We will share our experiences next week!

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Conclusions

- Catechism is hard work and discipline. But what's the root word of disciple? Discipline!
- If our minds are to be remapped for memorization, this will not happen overnight.
- Try and rehearse the texts three times a day. I think repetition is key to memorization.

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