

In 1643, during a time of political turmoil, military conflict and threats to religious freedom, the English Parliament called upon 121 "*learned, Godly and judicious*" pastors, teachers and Theologians, to meet at Westminster Abby to provide considered guidance on issues of Faith and conduct, doctrine and devotion, applying the Lordship of Christ to all areas of life.

The Westminster Assembly produced what has been described as the finest, most Biblical description and definition of Christian life, faith and practise. ***The Westminster Confession, The Larger Catechism*** and ***The Shorter Catechism***, have been adopted as the standards for most Reformed Churches.

The Westminster Confession was adopted by Act of the English Parliament in 1648 and by the Scottish Parliament in 1649.

The Westminster Standards have been adopted, with minor modifications, by the Congregational Churches in the form of *The Savoy Declaration* (1658), by the Baptists, in the *London Confession of Faith* (1689), and others.

The Westminster Catechism is built on the earlier Reformation ***Heidelberg Catechism***, of 1563, which along with *The Belgic Confession* and *The Canons of Dort* form the Three Forms of Unity of the Dutch Reformed Churches.

The Westminster Standards present succinct summaries of the Faith that are thoroughly and consistently Biblical. The Westminster Catechism has guided pastors and Sunday School teachers for over three centuries as an excellent teaching tool to encourage students to ask critical questions and to seek the truth from the Scripture as our ultimate authority. It is the duty of the Church to clearly define, defend, proclaim and teach the whole counsel of God to a world of doubt and confusion.

"As far as I am able to judge, the Christian world, since the days of the Apostles, had never a synod of more excellent divines than the Westminster Assembly." Rev. Richard Baxter

"The Westminster Standards ...are the richest and most precise and best guarded statement ever penned... and of all that must be safeguarded if Evangelical Faith is to persist in the

world." Dr. B.B. Warfield

*The above article is adapted from **The Shorter Catechism**.*

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