

TO THE READER: A good learning technique is to answer the following questions BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, you can refine your answers based on your reading. Then, when your group gathers, each can discuss his or her view and you can either affirm or modify what you wrote.

1. If someone asked you, "What is a Reformed church," how would you answer?
2. List some of the important details that caused the Protestant Reformation and what people were involved. [7-9]
3. A Reformed church has six distinctives, the first of which is our belief that the Scripture is the very Word of God. Why do you think God gave us the Bible? [9]
4. We often refer to the Scriptures as God's only infallible rule of faith and practice. What does this mean? [9]
5. Reformed churches use creeds, like the Westminster and Heidelberg. What is a creed, and why is it helpful? [10]
6. The second emphasis of the Reformed church is the absolute sovereignty of God. But, if God is that sovereign, how can man be free to choose? [11-13]
7. Another mark of a Reformed church is our emphasis that God is sovereign in our salvation. But, many ask, "is it fair for God to choose some and reject others?" [13-17]
8. Non-Reformed churches tend to teach that God, in His *foreknowledge*, looked ahead and saw those who would believe in Him, and on that basis He elected them. Can you see the flaw in this thinking? [13-17]

9. After your reading, how do you relate to Steve's wrestling with the issues of divine sovereignty?

10. A third distinctive of Reformed churches is our view that the Bible has one main theme running through it – the covenant. What do you understand by the concept of the covenant, and what makes it so important? [17-18]

11. Our fourth characteristic is our understanding and approach to the Law of God. When you think of the word “law,” what comes to your mind? How does that differ from God’s Law? [18-21]

12. Our understanding of the church is point number five. What are some of the marks of the church that come to your mind? [21-27]

13. Our final mark is God’s Kingdom. Jesus prayed, “Your Kingdom come...” What did He mean by that, when the Kingdom was already here?

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

APPLICATION

1. The only way to truly know any denomination is to know what it believes. Therefore, make it a point to get a copy of the *Westminster Confession* and the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*. Not only read them, but check out all the Scripture texts used to support what is stated.
2. Read G.I. Williamson’s commentaries on the *Westminster Confession for Study Classes* and his *Westminster Shorter Catechism for Study Classes*. This is a great way to help deepen your understanding of the beliefs of a Reformed church, and to deepen your faith in the God we love.

For Further Study

On Being Presbyterian by Sean Michael Lucas. P&R, 2006.

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