

Each week of 2019 we will take a brief look at one or two questions from the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Our aim is to help you become familiar with this introduction to Christian doctrine. The psalmist declares, "Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them" (111:2). Catechisms were designed to assist the people of God to delight in his works and study them more closely.

Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?

A. *Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.*

Nearly every catechism that was produced during the Reformation starts with an overarching, summarizing question. This draws our minds immediately to the ultimate things of life. We're dealing with spiritual matters that have eternal ramifications.

Every person longs for purpose, something to get us out of bed in the morning, something to captivate our minds and hearts. Education, careers, families, sporting teams, various hobbies all promise a certain level of identity and purpose. The problem is that anything other than God will fail or end. When we find our greatest sense of purpose in anything other than God, we are susceptible to disappointment and despair.

So we are called to find our chief end, or purpose, in God, the never-changed, never-failing rock in our lives. The catechism gives two aspects to this singular purpose: Glorifying God and enjoying God. They are distinct and yet interrelated.

To glorify God means to glory in all of God's goodness and work. There are several aspects to this glory. We give credit to God. We give thanks to God. We praise God. We celebrate his work. It is the acknowledgement that God is the fountainhead for every good and perfect gift and that without him, we have nothing. As Paul says in Romans 11:36, "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever."

To enjoy God means to delight in him and his blessings offered through Christ. Such enjoyment is rooted in contentment with the goodness of God, not longing for a substitute.

To glorify God feeds our enjoyment of God. To enjoy God feeds our glorifying of God. So these two become intertwined as a singular purpose for which we live. God is infinitely glorious and never-changing. We can never exhaust this purpose in our lives or eternity. So press on in knowing him, thanking him, praising him, delighting in him, and enjoying him.