

**A CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN:  
DESIGNED TO TEACH THE FIRST  
PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN  
RELIGION AND THE PLAIN AND  
GREAT MORAL DUTIES**

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A Catechism for Children: Designed to Teach the First Principles of the Christian Religion and the plain and Great Moral Duties by Robert Aspland

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**ROBERT ASPLAND**

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A  
CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN,  
DESIGNED TO  
TEACH THE FIRST PRINCIPLES  
OF  
THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION  
AND  
THE PLAIN AND GREAT MORAL  
DUTIES.

BY  
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HACKNEY.

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1840.

## PREFACE.

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THE Compiler of the following little Catechism\* confesses that he long objected to this mode of instructing the Young in their religious and moral duty, probably from his having been tasked beyond his capacity in his early years by more than one doctrinal formula of this kind. He thinks he has lived to see the great expediency, if not the necessity, of teaching children the lessons of Divine wisdom *authoritatively*, of fixing them by repetition in the memory, and of furnishing them with a standard to which in after life they may refer. Have not too many of our young been left *untaught*, from the fear of teaching them any thing which in the progress of their minds they may have to unlearn?

\* The word *Catechism* is from the Greek, and signifies a form of instruction by question and answer, commonly understood of religious instruction. *Catechist* is one that teaches, and *Catechumen* one that is taught by, a Catechism.

The same scruple would stop early instruction on many other subjects besides moral and Christian duty.

The idea of the following Catechism was suggested by the call for some manual of this description in the Girls' School belonging to the New Gravel-Pit Meeting-house, Hackney. The first object was to adapt it to them; but in pursuing this, the Compiler did not lose sight of the desirableness of so framing the little work as to make it fit also for schools of boys, and for families containing both sexes.

In the language of the Catechism, he has aimed at simplicity and plainness; he cannot flatter himself, however, that he has completely succeeded where so many have partially or entirely failed. The religious chapters are formed upon the basis of the Scriptures, and particularly of the New Testament; those upon moral duties are drawn up in the phraseology which has been established by the common sense of the people, and here, as also in another part of the work, passages have been taken from what is called the Church Catechism.

The necessity of brevity has been all along felt, and the Compiler has restrained himself from the introduction of every thing which did not appear essential to his design. He has put within brackets passages which the younger learners may pass over, and by the omission of which the Catechism may be much shortened. The Scripture References, which are inclosed in the same manner, are inserted for the sake of the elder scholars. The use of them may lead children to the desirable habit of consulting the Scriptures for themselves.

Let it be suggested that where the Catechism is not committed to memory, or not entirely, it may be found useful to form classes of scholars for reading it, the Teachers taking the Questions and the Scholars the Answers, including the Scripture References, which they should read in full from the Bible.

The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Creed called after the Apostles, are inserted, because it is indispensable to religious instruction to make the young acquainted with what are accounted the symbols of Revealed Religion throughout the



civilized world. At the same time, such instruction is given as seemed necessary to explain, to young minds, these religious formularies, which appear to the Author to have been misunderstood on some points, at least in popular acceptance. It will be found stated in its proper place, that the Creed, improperly attributed to the Apostles, has been altered so far as to bring it back to the phraseology and, as is conceived, the spirit of the New Testament.

The *Charge to Children on Leaving School* may, possibly, make a useful impression on the heart, at the time when it may be expected that the attention is excited and the affections are lively.

To carry out the design of religious education, the Compiler of the Catechism has drawn up several sets of *Prayers for Children*, in school, in the closet, and in the family. Although part of one and the same plan, these are, for obvious reasons, printed and published separately.

HACKNEY, APRIL 2, 1840.

## CATECHISM FOR CHILDREN.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ON RELIGION.

*Question* (1). By what religious name are you called, my child?

*Answer.* By the name of *Christian*.

*Q.* (2). What do you understand by the name of *Christian*?

*A.* By the name of *Christian* I understand one who believes in *Jesus Christ* and obeys him as his Lord, in things pertaining to the conscience.

*Q.* (3). What is the meaning of the name *Jesus*?

*A.* The name *Jesus* in the New Testament is the same as *Joshua* in the Old, and signifies a Saviour.

*Q.* (4). What is the meaning of the name *Christ*?

*A.* The name *Christ* is the same as *Messiah*, and signifies *The Anointed*.

*Q.* (5). Why is the name *Anointed*, that is, *Messiah* or *Christ*, applied to the Lord *Jesus*?

*A.* Because as prophets and kings of old were set apart to their offices by the anointing with oil, so the Lord *Jesus*, being ordained of Almighty God to a great and holy office, is said by a figure of speech to be God's *Anointed* or *Christ* or *Messiah*.

*Q.* (6). How do you know that *Jesus Christ* was sent from God?

*A.* I know it,

1st, by his wonderful works or miracles, which he could not have done unless God had been with him [John ix. 33, x. 37, 38, xiv. 10, 11; Acts ii. 22, x. 38];

2ndly, by his wisdom; for never man spake like this man [John vii. 45, 46];

and 3rdly, by his spotless virtue; for though tempted in all points like the chil-