

# Of Catechising & Covenant Faithfulness

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*A Notice for the BRF Family Conference, August 2004*

Abraham has the remarkable honour of being singled out amongst the great saints of the Old Covenant as being God's "friend" (Isa. 41:8). Having entered into a covenant with Abraham, God divulged His present purpose to His new friend, in light of the fact that Abraham would "command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Gen. 18:19). We would do well to follow the example of Abraham our faithful father and archetypal covenant-keeper (Rom. 4:16). The "book of the covenant" containing God's words to us, instructs us to "teach them diligently" to our children when we sit at home, when we go out, and when we go to bed and get up (II Chron. 34:30; Deut. 6:7). It is only as we do this that we can have any claim to be bringing up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and therefore have any reason to expect God to establish His covenant with us to a thousand generations (Eph. 6:4).

And yet, tragic to see, this formal (but natural), parental instruction of children in the Word of God and that "form of sound words" received from our fathers (II Tim. 1:13) appears to have fallen upon hard times in many Evangelical and Reformed churches today. Even from professing Christian homes, fewer and fewer can now say that "from a child" they have "known the holy scriptures" and been catechised in the doctrine that they contain (II Tim. 3:15).

The doctrinal basis of the BRF comprises no fewer than three outstanding catechisms. In order to encourage one another in the instruction of our children, and, not least, to encourage the children themselves, the BRF Council has decided that *at our next Family Conference, there will be, God willing, an optional catechism test for the children present.* The contents of this test will be as follows:

- The Decalogue as found in Exodus 20:3-17 (AV).
- The Lord's Prayer as found in Matthew 6:9-13 (AV).
- Answer 1 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (1563).
- Answers 94 & 98 of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1648).
- Psalm 23 (Metrical Version, 1650).

We strongly encourage all who are able to support this exercise: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Ps. 34:11).