



Hungarian Unitarian Catechism

The Catechism of the Hungarian Unitarian Church in Transylvanian Romania

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I. Concepts

1) What is religion?

Religion is love toward God and toward our neighbor (all neighbors).

Mark 12,28-31: And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered: "The first is: Hear, O Israel: the Lord, our God is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.

1John 4,21: The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also ;

Matthew 7,21: Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of God, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

2) How do we know that God exists?

Whether we look to the universe and its order, or to ourselves and our talents, we obtain the conviction that there exists one God, who created, maintains and manages everything.

3) Of what does love toward God consist?

Love toward God consists of our respect for his laws and our endeavor to fulfill them.

The child sincerely loves and respects his parents if he obeys them and conduct himself so that he merits their love. In the same manner, we respect and love God if we are obedient and try to live according to his will.

4) What is the purpose of religion?

The purpose of religion is to refine our souls through LOVE toward GOD and neighbor, to ennoble our feelings and to encourage service to God and neighbor.



5) Does humanity need religion?

The purpose of religion clearly shows that humanity needs religion; human history demonstrates this as well, according to the evidence of which there has never been a people that did not have religion.

6) How did we obtain a more pure religion?

According to the teaching of the history of religion, we obtained a more pure religion because God sent enlightened, wise, morally religious teachers who led us to a clearer religious conviction, corresponding with reason.

We use to call God's messengers prophets, Apostles or founders of religion.

In the course of history, such messengers of God were Zoroaster to the Persians, Confucius to the Chinese, Buddha to the Hindus, Moses and the prophets to the Jews and Mohammed to the Arabs.

7) Who was the greatest prophet of God?

The greatest prophet of God was Jesus, the founder of the Christian Religion. He taught us both the knowledge and love of God.

See: For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3,11)

8) How do we know about the teachings of the prophets and of Jesus?

We know the teachings of the prophets and of Jesus from the Bible. Usually we call the Bible Holy Scripture.

9) What is the Bible?

The Bible is a collection which includes 66 books from antiquity, the authors and contents of which differ.

10) How many parts does the Bible have?

The Bible has two principal parts: The Old Covenant or Old Testament and The



New Covenant or New Testament. The Old Testament contains 39 books, the New Testament 27 books.

11) **Who wrote the books of the Old Testament?**

The books of the Old Testament were written before the birth of Jesus by teachers and prophets of the Jewish people in the Hebrew and Aramaic languages

The order of Old Testament's books:

The Five Books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Esra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastics, Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi.

12) **What does the Old Testament contain?**

The Old Testament contains the morally religious laws of the Jewish people and the teachings of the prophets.

13) **Which is the fundamental teaching of the Old Testament?**

The fundamental teaching of the Old Testament is the Ten Commandments of Moses, which can be summarized as follows: God is One and you shall worship only God, do not make idols and do not worship them, do not take God's name in vain; keep the holy days; honor your parents; you shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not lie; you shall not be envious.

See for the whole text of the Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20,1-17:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of Bondage.

You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in earth beneath, or that is in the water under the



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earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Honor your father and you mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.

14) Who wrote the books of the New Testament?

The books of the New Testament were written after the death of Jesus in Greek language by the evangelists and Apostles.

The order of the New Testament books: The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, The Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul: Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews, the letters of James, I and II Peter, I,II and III John, the letter of Jude and the book of Revelations.



15) What does the New Testament contain?

The first part of the New Testament: The Gospels According to Mark, Matthew, Luke and John contains the life history and the teachings of Jesus; the other part acquaints us with the work and teaching of the Apostles. Because of its content, the New Testament is also called the Gospel which means "joyful message".

16) Why it is necessary to know the bible?

It is necessary to know the Bible because the teachings included in it are the basis of the Christian religion and (the basis for) direction of Christian life. For this reason we have to read and study the Bible with love and reason.

See: But he answered, it is written: One does not live by bread only, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4,4)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scripture we might have hope. (Rome 5,4)

17) How do we call those whose religion is based upon Jesus' teachings?

Those, whose religion is based upon Jesus' teaching we call Christians. The "Christian" name is derived from the Latin "Christians" which means: belongs to Jesus, the follower of Jesus.

See: So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many people and it was in Antioch that the disciples were called first "Christians". (Acts 11,26)

18) Are Christians United?

Christianity is not united. In the course of history the Christian Religion has divided into different denominations. But Christians living on earth are bound together by Jesus' teaching on brotherly unity. The number of Christians is about one billion.

See: For just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the One Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1Corinthians 12,12-13)



19) Why it Christianity divided into different denominations?

Among the Christians of antiquity and later in the age of the Reformation, different thoughts about the personality and teaching of Jesus arose. Denominations have been formed from the followers of these different religious concepts.

20) What is your religion?

I am a Unitarian.

21) Who was the founder of the Unitarian Church?

The founder of the Unitarian Church was Francis David (Dávid Ferenc).

22) What do we know about the life of Francis David?

According to tradition, Francis David was born in Cluj (Kolozsvár) around 1510. He completed studies in Cluj (Kolozsvár), Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár) and Wittemberg (Germany). After he returned from his pilgrimage, he worked as school director and minister in Beszterce, Petres and Cluj (Kolozsvár).

23) To what purpose did Francis David devoted his life?

The purpose to which Francis David devoted his life was the restoration of the pure Christianity of Jesus.

24) How did Francis David endeavor to realize this purpose for his life?

Francis David endeavor to realize this purpose for his life by preaching and spreading the pure Christianity of Jesus through the pulpit, debates and books.

The co-workers of Francis David were: Gaspar Heltai, Istvan (Stephen) Basilius, Benedek (Benedict) Óvári, Miklos (Nicholas) Bogáti Fazekas, Gyorgy (Georgio, George) Blandrata and others.

25) How did the people of the country accept the teaching of Francis David?

The greater part of the Hungarian people of the country agreed with Francis David and along with King John Sigismund, became followers of the pure Christianity of



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Jesus, as it was taught by Francis David. This religion was named Unitarian, from (the doctrine of the) unity of God.

The word "Unitarian" is of Latin origin "unus, unitas" which means "believers of one God who profess the indivisible unity of God". The Unitarian name was first used in 1600 at the Diet of Lécfalva.

26) What was the most important result of spreading the Unitarian Religion?

The most important result of the spreading of the Unitarian faith was the proclamation of religious freedom at the Diet of Torda in 1568. It was first declared to the world in Transylvania, that everyone can exercise that religion which agrees with their understanding, because "faith is the gift of God".

We consider the founding of the Unitarian Church (to be) from the proclamation of this law.

The Diet of Marosvásárhely (Tg.Mureş) confirmed the law of religious freedom in 1571.

The decision of the Diet of Torda in 1568:

"Our Royal Highness, as he has decreed on matters of religion, together with the Diet, now confirms again that in every place the preachers shall preach and explain the Gospel, each according to his understanding of it, and if the congregation like it, then it shall be considered good; if not, no one shall compel them, for their soul would not be satisfied, but they shall be permitted to keep a preacher whose teaching they approve. Therefore none of the superintendents or others shall annoy or abuse the preachers on account of their religion, in accordance with the previous resolutions of the Diet, or allow any to be imprisoned or punished by removal from his post on account of his teachings, for Faith is the gift of God; this gift comes from hearing and hearing by the word of God".

27) How long was Francis David able to serve the pure Christianity of Jesus?

Francis David served the pure Christianity of Jesus only until 1579; the enemies of the religious freedom sentenced him to prison for life as an innovator. They imprisoned him in Deva castle, where he died on November 15th 1579.



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The grave of Francis David is unknown. At the place of his suffering, in one cell of the castle of Deva, a memorial column preserves his name and proclaims his life's work.

The first memorial was placed in 1910 by our Church on the occasion of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Francis David's birthday. The present memorial was placed in reverence by Unitarian believers in 1948. (note from Sandor Leta: this was destroyed by unknown people and the last plaque it was commemorated in 1997.)

28) What happened after Francis David's death?

Francis David's death was followed by a very difficult period in the history of our church. First, religious intolerance and later, political suppression oppressed our church. Instead of building, our ancestors were forced to gather all their forces for self-defense. In this hard struggle many of our churches and congregations were lost, as well as about three-quarters of our believers. Only the providence of God, the law of religious freedom and the heroic persistence of a portion of our believers saved the church from total destruction.

29) How long was this difficult period?

This difficult period continued nearly 300 years. After that, due to historical developments, there came a time which was more free. Our church was delivered from suppression, gathered together its remaining strength and was able to build the kingdom of God freely. Through the sacrifices of believers, churches were built and the number of church members increased. Then it was possible to mention the name of Francis David and to preach in his spirit. In 1879, our church was able to celebrate the memory of its founder, Francis David, for the first time on the occasion of 300th anniversary of his death.

30) What is your Confession?

My confession is:

I believe in one God, the creator of life, our providential Father.

I believe in Jesus, the best among the sons of God, our true master-teacher.



I believe in the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the mission of the Unitarian Church.

I believe in repentance and eternal life.

II. God

31) What do we mean when we say: I believe in one God?

When we say: I believe in one God, we express our conviction, that God exists, and that God, both in essence and in person is the only One.

Even reason comprehends God as only one; God, as the highest reality cannot be more than one.

The Bible teaches about God's indivisible unity:

Thus says the Lord...I am the first and I am the last besides me there is no God. Isaiah 44,6

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone... Deuteronomy 6,4

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one... Mark 12,29b

Jesus said to him: "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. Mark 10,18.

...one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4,6

32. How are we to comprehend God?

We comprehend God as Spirit and as Love.

God is Spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. John 4,24

No one has ever seen God. The only son who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known. John 1,18



Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2 Corinthians 3,17

33. It is possible to portray God?

We cannot portray in pictures or sculptures because God is spirit. Therefore those who worship God - according to Jesus' teaching - must worship God in spirit and truth.

Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. Acts 17,29

34. How can we know God?

We can know God from his creative and providential works.

35. What do we mean by the creative work of God?

By creative work of God we mean that the whole universe and all of our lives are the creation of God.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth... Genesis 1,1

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father, we are the clay and you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Isaiah 64,8

The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, Acts 17,24

36. What do we mean by the providential work of God?

By providential work of God we mean that God takes care of all of his creatures, he arranges everything according to purposes most wise and guides it on the pathway of perfection toward the Kingdom of God.

37. How does God preserve the order of this world and how does he provide for his creatures?



God maintain the order of this world with his laws. Also, God provides for his creatures through these laws.

The laws of God are perfect and eternal laws.

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinance of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Psalm 19,7-9.

38. How is God presented by his creative and providential works?

The creative and providential works of God present him as: eternal, perfect, omnipotent, good, just and merciful. These qualities result from his fatherly love.

39. What do we mean: God is eternal?

When we say: God is eternal, we mean that God was always and will be forever.

Psalm 102,26-28: They will perish, but thou dost endure; they will all wear out like a garment. Thou changes them like raiment, and they pass away, but thou art the same and thy years have no end. The children of the servants shall dwell secure; their posterity shall be established before thee.

Psalm 90,2: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

40. What do we mean: God is perfect?

When we say, God is perfect, we mean that all of God's creation and activity is the best and the most correct and that the instruments he uses for the fulfillment of his laws are always the most suitable that could be chosen.

Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect. Matthew 5,48.

Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven - what you can do? Deeper than Sheol - what can you know? Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. Job 11,7-9



41. What do we mean: God is omnipotent?

When we say, God is omnipotent, we mean that God can do all he wants, but does not act contrary to his laws.

Jesus looked at them and said, "for mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible. Matthew 19,26.

42. What do we mean: God is good?

When we say, God is good, we mean that he does only good with all of his creatures, not only with those who are good and worthy, but with those who are worthy of punishment as well.

And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good..." Matthew 19,17

So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 1 John 4,16

43. What do we mean: God is just?

When we say, God is just, we mean that God judges our lives and all of our deeds, rewarding the good and punishing evil. Everyone must bear the consequences of his or her life and works.

See: Romans 2,6-11: For he will render to every man according to his works: to those who be patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, but glory and honor and peace for every one who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. For God shows no partiality.

44. What do we mean: God is merciful?

When we say, God is merciful, we mean that his fatherly love makes allowances for our faults, gives us time for improvement and to reform ourselves and he forgives us.



See: *Luke 15,11-24 - the prodigal son*

45. What does all that we have learned about God persuade us to do?

All these we learned about God persuades us to worship the one God in spirit and truth, to trust him, to love him and to live and work according to his laws.

III. The child of God

46. Which is the most noble creature of God on the earth?

The most noble creature of God on the earth is the human being.

47. How is the love of God made manifest toward us?

The love of God is made manifest toward us in that he raises us up from among the creatures and blesses us with spiritual gifts so that we can be his children and his collaborators.

1 John 3,1a: See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

48. What are our god-given spiritual gifts?

Our god-given spiritual gifts are as follows: faith, reason, free will, conscience and love.

49. What is Faith?

Faith is confidence in God, whereby we are able to create a childlike relationship with God, our providential Father.

Hebrew 11,1: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Romans 1,17b: He who through faith is righteous shall live.

50. What is reason?



Reason is that spiritual gift which help us to gather knowledge, to think and form opinions about God, ourselves, our neighbors and the world. In these activities reason in the lantern of faith as well.

1 Corinthians 2,[9-]10: [But as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him,] God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

Proverbs 20,27: The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts.

51. What is free will?

Free will is that spiritual gift by which we can decide freely for ourselves to follow the good and true, or the false and evil.

Romans 8,15(a): For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship.

Galatians 5,13: For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another.

52. What is conscience?

Conscience is that spiritual gift which considers our actions and encourages us for good, but restrains us from evil. Conscience rewards us if we do good and accuses us if we do evil.

Acts 24,16: So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward God and toward men.

53. What is love?

Love is that spiritual gift which enables us to become trusted children of God, and to live in peace with our neighbors. Love is the crown of our spiritual gifts.

Matthew 5,44-46: But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he



makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

54. How can we give thanks to God for our spiritual gifts?

We thank our providential Father for our spiritual gifts through love toward God and neighbor, through creative work and through unselfish service.

55. What is our calling?

Our calling is to build the Kingdom of God in this earthly life with the spiritual gifts received from God.

Matthew 6,33: But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well.

56. Can we perform our calling in this earthly life?

We can perform our calling in earthly life: God presented us with examples for this through the life of Jesus and the lives of workers for the Kingdom of God.

John 13,15: For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

IV. Jesus

57. What do we mean by "I believe in Jesus"?

When we say, I believe in Jesus, we express our conviction that Jesus is the greatest child and prophet of God, and his teaching is the surest way by which we can come to a real knowledge of God.

58. How do we know about Jesus?



We know about Jesus through the New Testament: from the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, where the history of his life and his teachings are written.

59. What do we know about the birth of Jesus?

Jesus was born during the rule of the Roman Emperor Augustus Octavius. His father was Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, his mother, Mary. His brothers: James, Joses, Judas and Simon. The Gospels did not mention the names of his sisters. Jesus lived in Nazareth with his parents, sisters and brothers.

Mark 6,3: Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us? And they took offence at him.

60. How did danger threaten Jesus in his infancy?

According to the gospel narrative, Herod the King of the Jews wanted to kill Jesus when he was a baby.

61. How did Jesus escape from this danger?

Jesus escaped from this danger because his parents carried him to Egypt and they returned from there to Nazareth after the death of Herod.

62. What do we know about Jesus' childhood?

When Jesus was 12, on occasion of the holidays, he went into the temple of Jerusalem with his parents. His clear mind excelled while talking there with the Elders. At his parents home he was an obedient and good child, growing up in body and spirit, in wisdom and in kindness toward God and people.

63. How old was Jesus when he began to teach?

Jesus began to teach at 30 years of age. Before he began to teach, John the Baptist baptized him.

64. What is the purpose of Jesus' teachings?



The purpose of Jesus' teachings is to acquaint us with the laws of God and thereby to deliver us from ignorance, sin and from the fear of death.

65. How does Jesus deliver us from ignorance?

Jesus deliver us from ignorance through his teaching and his example, which acquaints us with God, our duties and our callings.

66. How does Jesus deliver us from sin?

Jesus deliver us from sin by revealing what is sin and how one can avoid it. With the example of his life set before us, which we endeavor to follow, we escape more and more from sin.

67. How does Jesus deliver us from the fear of death?

Jesus delivers us from the fear of death by strengthening our faith in the fatherly love of God and in eternal life.

68. What do we call this activity of Jesus?

This activity of Jesus, by which he takes on the heavy charge of our spiritual life, we call deliverance. In that sense we believe that he is our deliverer.

69. Which is the greatest law of religion according to Jesus?

The greatest law of religion is summarized in the Great Commandments of love, which are as follows: "The first of all commandments: the Lord, our God, the Lord is one: and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength, The second is this: you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."

See Mark 12,29-31

Jesus expressed the truth of moral-religious life in his Sermon on the Mount and in his parables.

The teaching of the Sermon on the Mount is as follows:



Who are blessed? Matthew 5,3-13

The calling of the disciples: Matthew 5,13-17

The old and the new law: Matthew 5,17-48

Hypocrisy is the biggest sin: Matthew 6,1-23

The subject of our love can be only one: Matthew 6,24-34

In our decisions involving others we must be gentle and toward ourselves very rigorous: Matthew 7,1-14

The fruit of true religion is the act: Matthew 7,15-29

The most beautiful stories and parables of Jesus:

The sower: Mark 4,1-20

The Mustardseed, the Leaven and the Seed upon the Ground: Mark 4,26-33

The Good Samaritan: Luke 10,25-37

The Prodigal Son: Luke 15,11-32

The Talents: Matthew 25,14-30

The Woman of Samaria: John 4,1-42

The Children: Mark 10,13-16

The Pharisees and the Tax Collector: Luke 18,9-14

The Rich Young Man: Mark 10,17-31

Zacheus: Luke 19,1-10

The Woman taken in Adultery: John 8,3-11

Mary and Martha: Luke 10,38-42



The Rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16,19-31

The Foolish Rich Man: &The Great Supper: Luke 14,15-24

Nikodemus: John 3,1-21

The Bad Servant: Matthew 18,21-35

The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin: Luke 15,3-10

70. How do we summarize the teaching of Jesus?

We summarize the teaching of Jesus as follows:

God is one and is Spirit: God is our providential Father.

We are children of God and brothers and sisters to each other.

Our most important duty: to love God, to love our neighbors and to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

In fulfillment of our duties we shall listen to the voice of our conscience, we shall always choose good, truth and beauty, and we shall be loyal to these.

If we live in that way, our reward will be a restful heart, peace among us and the joy of eternal life.

71. Do we also call Jesus God?

We do not call Jesus God, because we know that he was in reality a man.

72. From what sources are we informed that Jesus was a real man?

We know that Jesus was a real man from the Gospels, where he first called himself a man and the son of man. But his real humanity is verified by his whole life as well: he was born, grew up in body and spirit, was happy, sorrowful, hungry, thirsty, suffered and died.

Jesus was considered to be a man by his disciples and his contemporaries as well.



73. How did Jesus differ from the other people?

Jesus differ from other people in that he lived according to the laws of God and all of his actions agreed with the will of his providential Father, so that he became for us "the way, the truth and the life".

74. What steps did Jesus take to spread his teachings?

Early in the beginning, Jesus gathered twelve men around him whom we call his disciples. With them he walked throughout the country, teaching everywhere, doing good for the poor, restoring health to the sick and through these means, preparing his disciples to spread his teachings.

His disciples were fishermen, tax collectors and poor people. Jesus' choice demonstrate that he knew people very well.

The names of the disciples:

Peter was the first, who was followed by Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartolomew and Thomas, Matthew, James, Simon, Thaddeus and Judas. These are the names in the order of the Holy Scripture.

75. Who were Jesus' enemies?

Jesus' enemies were those who feared for their power and material interests if the kingdom of God should spread and for that reason they slandered and persecuted him.

76. Did the attitude of Jesus' enemies discourage him?

The attitude of Jesus' enemies did not discourage him: Jesus trusted in God and in the truth of his teaching. And those who are founded upon these can never despair.

Isaiah 40,31: ...but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

77. What did Jesus do in the face of pressure and suffering?



In the face of pressure and suffering Jesus prayed, and he always obtained new strength and courage to continue his work.

Luke 22,39-42: And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation". And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed. "Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but, thine be done."

78. How must we pray?

We can learn how must we pray from the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father". Jesus taught that prayer to his disciples as a model, saying: "Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

Matthew 6,9-14

79. What kind of prayer should prayer be?

Prayer is a spiritual communion and conversation with God. So our prayer must be simple, short and rising from our spirit. In our prayer we must ask more about spiritual needs than about material goods. In that way our prayer will be a clear mirror of trust in God.

Matthew 6,6: But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

80. How many years did Jesus teach?

Jesus taught only three years: as a consequence of betrayal by Judas, his enemies captured him, he was judged by Pilate and crucified.

81. What was the manner of Jesus' death?



Jesus' death - as well as his life - was the manifestation of his love toward God and people. On the cross he prayed for his enemies as well, he asked God to forgive them and then he commended his soul to his providential Father.

Luke 23,34: And Jesus said: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do". And they cast lots to divide his garments.

Luke 23,46: Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last.

82. What happened after Jesus' death?

After Jesus' death, his loyal disciples and followers took his body down from the cross and buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. His disciples and followers loyally kept the memory of their master and teacher and proclaimed his teachings.

83. How do we remember the more important events of Jesus' life?

We remember the more important events of Jesus' life through Holy Days.

84. What are these Holy Days?

These holy days are: Christmas, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, Holy Thursday and Pentecost.

Christmas is the birth of Jesus, Palm Sunday his last entry into Jerusalem, Good Friday his death, Easter the victory of his ideas, Holy Thursday the awakening of the consciousness of the Disciples, Pentecost the triumph of the spiritual life and the Holy Day of the formation of the Christian Church.

Christmas is always on the 25th of December. The other holidays depend upon Easter. Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. If the full moon is on a Sunday, Easter is on that Sunday. The Sunday before Easter is Palm Sunday. Three days before Easter is Good Friday. 40 days after Easter is Holy Thursday and 10 days after that is Pentecost.

Christmas, Easter and Pentecost we usually celebrate for three consecutive days.

85. Do we have other Holy Days besides these?



In addition to these, other Holy Days are: All Sundays, Thanksgiving, the first day of the new year and 15th of November, which is the Memorial Day of Francis David's death.

The Holy Day of Thanksgiving is in the last Sunday of September.

86. What does all that we have learned about Jesus requires of us?

All that we have learned about Jesus requires us to love him, to endeavor to know his teachings and to faithfully follow his example.

Matthew 16,24: Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

V. The Holy Spirit

87. What do we mean by "Holy Spirit"?

By holy spirit we mean the power of God, and its help for good, which clarifies the intellect, cleanses the heart and strengthens the will, thus enlightening, calming, encouraging and making one happy.

1 Corinthians 3,16: Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 6,19: Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own...

88. Is the Holy Spirit a person?

The holy spirit cannot be a person, because it is the power of God.

II Timothy 1,7: ... for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.

89. What do some Christian denominations teach about the Holy Spirit?



Some Christian denominations teach that both the holy spirit and Jesus are each separate divine persons, and express that as follows: God is one in essence but three in person: Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. They call this the holy trinity.

We Unitarians do not teach the trinity, because we believe in the indivisible unity of God both in essence and in person.

90. In whom did the holy spirit work?

The holy spirit worked in the prophets, apostles and in all of those good and true people who loved God and humanity.

II Peter 1,21: Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God.

91. In whom did the holy spirit work in the fullest measure?

The holy spirit worked most fully in Jesus.

92. Is the Spirit of God working in us today?

The spirit of God is working in us today as well, enlightening our reason, enabling us to know good and truth and strengthening our will to persistently remain close to good and truth. At the same time it makes our frailties known, causing us to reform and to improve ourselves.

Galatians 5,14-25: For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another.

But I say, walk by the Spirit and do not gratify the desire of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against



such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh and its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

93. How does the work of the Holy Spirit help us?

The work of the holy spirit helps us to practice the teachings of Jesus, to attend worship with a zealous spirit, to participate in services, to preserve the purity of the heart and to perform our moral religious duties.

Matthew 5,8: Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

VI. The Unitarian Church

94. What do we mean by "The Unitarian Church"?

By "Unitarian Church" we mean the spiritual community of those people who, by following the teachings and example of Jesus, work for the building of the Kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2,19-22: So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

95. In what is the Unitarian Church embodied?

The Unitarian Church is embodied in those congregations and communities in which Jesus' teachings are proclaimed and which endeavor to follow his example.

96. Who is the head of the Unitarian Church?

The head of the Unitarian Church is Jesus, whose co-workers are all those who are proclaiming his teachings in congregations and communities.

97. How does Jesus lead the Unitarian Church?



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Jesus leads the Unitarian Church through his teachings. His teachings are proclaimed by ministers; the duties of believers are to listen, to know the Scripture and to live according its teachings.

98. Who are the leaders of the Unitarian Church?

The leaders of the Unitarian Church are as follows:

In congregations: The Minister, Curator(President), Cantor and the members of the Council.

In districts: The District Minister, the two District Curators (Presidents) and the District Notary.

In the general church: The Bishop, the two General Curators, and the General Notary.

The main governing bodies of the Unitarian Church are the General Assembly and the General Synod, the executive body of which is the Representative Council.

Matthew 20,26-28: It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servants and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

1 Peter 5,1-3: So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed. Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock.

99. How must be treat those in the church who behave poorly?

Because we are all children of God, we cannot expel those who behave poorly from the church, but we must endeavor to recover them for the good way through brotherly love and exemplary life.

100. How must the members of different denominations behave toward each other?



The duty of members of different denominations is to love each other as brothers because that is the characteristic sign of Jesus' followers:

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." John 13,35.

VII. Sin and repentance

101. What do we call sin?

We call sin all those improper actions which are committed with consciousness, through which we violate the law of God.

102. What type of sin do we recognize?

We know two types of sin: sins of commission and sins of omission. Sins of commission are the result of someone's improper action, and sins of omission are those in which someone fails to avail him- or herself for good either through delay, lack of sympathy or negligence.

103. Can someone say of him- or herself that she or he has no sin?

No one can say about him- or herself that she or he has committed no sin, because in spite of the resistance of our spirits, we frequently break the laws of God and do evil instead of good.

1 John 1,8: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

104. Why do we break the laws of God?

We break the laws of God because we are weak.

105. What do we mean when we say that we are weak?

When we say that we are weak, we mean that we are children of God in development. Besides our virtues we have failings as well, which are the constant



danger of our humanity because they obscure our understanding, they destroy the quietude of our hearts and disturb the peace among us. These failings together we call weaknesses.

James 1,13-15: Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God", for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one; but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. The desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.

106. How do the other denominations explain the evilness of human beings?

The other denominations explain the evilness of human beings with the Biblical story of the first human couple who ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. As a result of their action, the fall of humanity into evil was further compounded because human beings became unable to will good on their own. They call this original sin.

107. Do Unitarians teach original sin?

Unitarians do not teach original sin. We do not believe that through the sin of the first human couple we all became corrupted. It would contradict the love and justice of God to attribute to us the sin of others, because sin is one's own personal action.

108. What is the result of sin?

The result of sin is the denial our son- and daughtership and the separation between God and humanity. These expressions are our punishment.

Galatians 6,7-8: Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

109. Is there forgiveness?

There is forgiveness. But if sin has taken place, it is impossible to erase as if it had never happened. However, God is a longsuffering, loving Father, who does not reject us because of our evil, but gives us time and the possibility to reform and improve ourselves. This is the forgiveness about which Jesus taught us in his parables. (See for example the parable of the Prodigal Son. Luke 15,11-30)



110. From whom do we expect forgiveness of our sins?

We expect forgiveness of our sins only from God.

111. How can we expect forgiveness of our sins?

We can expect forgiveness of our sins by God only if we sincerely repent, turn away from our sins and daily strengthen ourselves in love and goodness.

VIII. Eternal Life

112. What do we mean by: I believe in eternal life?

When we say: "I believe in eternal life" we express our conviction that life is eternal and that the soul is immortal.

113. How do we understand death?

We understand death as a change which is according to the law of God. After death our body falls to dust as it was before, but our soul lives on in God, from whom it was never detached.

Ecclesiastes 12,7: ... and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

114. What awaits us in eternal life?

In eternal life, God examines everyone's lives and actions, and grants reward or punishment in accordance with those lives.

IX. Liturgical services

115. Which of our liturgical services are based on Jesus' teaching?

Two of our liturgical services are based on Jesus' teaching: Baptism and Lord's Supper.



116. Besides Baptism and the Lord's Supper, what other liturgies are celebrated?

Besides Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the following liturgies are celebrated: Confirmation, the Marriage ceremony and the Funeral.

117. What effect do we attribute to these liturgical celebrations?

We attribute a strengthening effect for our moral and religious life to these liturgical celebrations. The services are resources reminding us of our duties and moving us to follow the example of Jesus and to perform good deeds.

118. What is baptism?

Baptism is the service through which we become members of the Christian Church.

In the strict sense of the word, baptism does not make anyone a Christian. Baptism is merely a solemn expression on the parts of parents and god-parents that they appreciate their Christian faith and want their children to grow up and live in that faith too.

119. When should we baptize?

Jesus did not prescribe a specifically preferred time when we should baptize. A long time ago Christians were baptized when they were able to confess their faith. The custom today is for Christians to baptize their children in infancy.

120. If someone dies without baptism, is she or he condemned?

If someone dies without baptism he or she is not condemned because baptism itself is not redemptive.

121. Is it appropriate to neglect the baptism?

It is not appropriate to neglect the baptism and it is not customary for people who respect Jesus' teaching and the services of church to do so.

122. When do we express our knowledge of what it is baptism requires of us?



We express our knowledge of what baptism requires of us on the occasion of confirmation.

123. What is confirmation?

Confirmation is the expression of our strengthening in the Unitarian faith. Through confirmation we become independent members of the church and we assume responsibility before God for all of our deeds and our faithfulness.

124. How is the confirmation completed?

Confirmation is completed through the Lord's Supper when we partake for the first time.

125. What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is the liturgy through which we remember Jesus' life and death, and we receive encouragement to following his example.

126. From what sources do we know the story of the Lord's Supper?

We know the story of the Lord's Supper from the Gospels and II Corinthians. According to those sources, Jesus, before the night of his death, gathered his disciples and ate with them the traditional Paschal lamb. After supper, Jesus took bread in his hand, broke and blessed it and gave it to each of his disciples in order, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body which is broken for you." After that, Jesus took the cup in the same way, he blessed it and gave it to each of his disciples in order, saying: "Drink from this, all of you. This is my blood which is shed for you." Giving both the bread and wine he added: "Whenever you do this, do it in remembrance of me."

1 Corinthians 11,23-26: For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me". In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me". For as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



127. Why do we call this service the Lord's Supper?

We call this service the Lord's Supper because Jesus first observed it on the occasion of a supper.

128. Of what does the Lord's Supper consist?

The Lord's Supper consists of bread and wine.

129. What do we mean by the expression: "This is my body, this is my blood?"

By the expression: "This is my body, this is my blood?" we mean that the bread symbolizes the broken body of Jesus, and the wine symbolizes the blood of Jesus.

The Roman Catholics teach that the bread and wine changes to the literal body and blood of Jesus after the blessing of the Priest. According to this teaching, "This is my body, this is my blood" means that the body and blood of Christ are literally present. Therefore, the Eucharist is given only in one kind: The wafer.

The Orthodox believers also teach that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper is really Jesus' body and blood, which are distributed in two kinds.

According of the Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession, in the wafer and wine of the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ is present.

The Reformed teach that believers receive the body and blood of Christ spiritually in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper.

130. Who is required to receive the Lord's Supper?

All of those who are confirmed Unitarians and who keep Jesus' memories in respect, are required to receive the Lord's Supper.

131. Who cannot receive the Lord's Supper?

The mentally ill, drunkards and children cannot receive the Lord's Supper, because they cannot distinguish this rite from the common meal.

132. Where do we receive the Lord's Supper?



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We usually receive the Lord's Supper in the church, where members of the congregation, through participation in the sharing of one loaf and wine in common, receive the encouragement of filial love and harmony with neighbors.

For those who are indisposed or ill and for those who cannot go to the church, the minister can bring the Lord's Supper to them in their homes.

133. Can those with guilt receive the Lord's Supper?

Those with guilt may receive the Lord's Supper, and are not excluded from the Lord's Table, because the remembrance of Jesus can promote their improvement.

134. How often do Unitarians receive the Lord's Supper?

Unitarians receive the Lord's Supper four times yearly: During the Holy days of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Autumn Thanksgiving day.

Besides enumerated holidays, Unitarians can receive the Lord's Supper on occasions such as church dedications and Synods in the place there these are organized.

135. How must we prepare to become worthy guests for the Lord's Table?

To become worthy guests of the Lord's Table, we must prepare ourselves in an inner and spiritual way.

We must return thanks to God that God has created us, not only with physical, but spiritual life as well.

We must remember Jesus with feelings of respect and love.

We must have an attitude of good will and love for our neighbor, with whom we are all children of one God.

Repenting our mistakes and our sins, we must promise that in the future we will endeavor to better preserve the purity of our hearts and to live a life worthy of God and of ourselves.

These together create our self-examination, without which we make useless our gathering around the Lord's Table. The Apostle Paul reminded us: "Let a man



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examine himself and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup, for anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body and drinks judgment upon himself." (1 Corinthians 11,28-29)

As to outside appearance, we note that God does not look upon your exterior. Nevertheless, in accordance with good manners, we must gather around the Lord's Table clean and well dressed.

In order to maintain the order of the liturgy, we must observe the following: After the minister finishes his sermon and prayer from behind the Lord's Table, the male members of the congregation gather on the square of the church, where they stand side by side. Then the minister gives a piece of bread to everyone in the order in which they are standing, which the members usually take with their right hand to eat. After that the minister takes the cup with wine and gives it to everyone. Usually the cup is received with the right hand and drunk. When the minister has distributed the bread and the wine to all of those who are standing around the table, he offers a short prayer. After that, those who received the Lord's Supper return to their seats without noise and without pushing.

If the congregation is so large that the men cannot all stand together at the same time, usually the older members gather first. After the elders, those who are younger gather second and are received in the same order for the Lord's Supper.

After the men, the women gather for the Lord's Supper in one or two groups, depending on their number.

It is desirous and of good manner that those who have received the Lord's Supper first remain in the church until all of the congregation has received the elements, because of celebrants depart during this time they disturb the devotional nature of the liturgy.

136. Are you ready for the Lord's Supper?

We are ready to take the Lord's Supper and to give witness to our beliefs thereby. At the same time, we thank God, our providential Father, for enlightening our reason, and allowing us that time when we became able to know the truth of the Unitarian religion and our moral and religious duties, that through these we work for our earthly happiness and salvation.



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We are trusting firmly in the one eternal God, our providential Father. Be Glory to his name forever and ever.

Amen.