

THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

WHAT MAN OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING GOD

QUESTIONS # 77 & 36.

(Larger Catechism)

Q #77. *Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?*

A. Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification,¹ yet they differ, in that God in justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ;² in sanctification of his Spirit infuseth grace, and enableth to the exercise thereof;³ in the former, sin is pardoned;⁴ in the other, it is subdued:⁵ the one doth equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation⁶ the other is neither equal in all,⁷ nor in this life perfect in any,⁸ but growing up to perfection.⁹

(Shorter Catechism)

Q #36. *What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?*

A. The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are, assurance of God's love, peace of conscience,¹⁰ joy in the Holy Ghost,¹¹ increase of grace,¹² and perseverance therein to the end.¹³

Question 1—*Is there a connection between justification and sanctification?*

Answer—Yes, justification and sanctification are inseparably joined together, so that no one has a warrant to claim the one without the other, Rom. 8:30. Thus, the apostle joins the work which pertains to justification, righteousness and redemption, to that working in us of sanctification, 1 Cor. 1:30. Elsewhere, we are said to be saved by the working of the Holy Ghost, Tit. 3:5; which is the beginning of the work of sanctification, Tit. 3:7. So, according to Paul, some who were once great sinners, and afterwards made true believers, are brought to sanctification by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 6:11. Such is this connection, that when God promises pardon of sin, through justification, he gives ground for them to expect he would subdue their iniquities through that spiritual process known as sanctification, God himself joining the one to other in his people, Mic. 7:18, 19.

¹ 1 Cor. 6:11; 1:30.

² Rom. 4:6, 8.

³ Ezek. 36:27.

⁴ Rom. 3:24, 25.

⁵ Rom. 6:6, 14.

⁶ Rom. 8:33, 34.

⁷ 1 John 2:12-14; Heb. 5:12-14.

⁸ 1 John 1:8, 10.

⁹ 2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 3:12-14.

¹⁰ Rom. 5:1, 2, 5.

¹¹ Rom. 14:17.

¹² Prov. 4:18.

¹³ 1 John 5:13; 1 Pet. 1:5.

Question 2—*Wherein lies the difference between justification and sanctification?*

Answer—First, in justification, God imputes the righteousness of Christ to us, Rom. 4:6, 8; whereas, in sanctification the Spirit infuses grace and enables to the exercise of it, Ezek. 36:27. The righteousness whereby we are justified is, without us, wrought out by Christ for us, Rom. 5:19. That which Christ did as our surety, is placed to our account and accepted by the justice of God as if it had been done by us, Eph. 1:6. In sanctification, on the other hand, the graces of the Spirit are wrought and excited in us, Ezek. 37:24; and we are denominated holy, and our right to eternal life is evinced, though not procured, Heb. 13:21.

Second, in justification sin is pardoned, Rom. 3:24, 25; in sanctification, it is subdued, Rom. 6:6, 14. Justification takes away the guilt of sin, Col. 1:14; sanctification destroys its reigning power, Gal. 2:19, 20. When sin is pardoned, it shall not be our ruin, Jer. 33:16; yet it gives daily disturbance and uneasiness, makes work for repentance, and is to be opposed to our dying to it, and living to righteousness, Rom. 7:21.

Third, justification equally frees all believers from the avenging wrath of God, in which respect it is perfect in this life, so that a justified person shall never fall into condemnation, Rom. 8:33, 34; whereas, the work of sanctification is not equal in all, not perfect in this life, but growing up to perfection, 1 John 2:12-14. In the latter, we see a process characterized by growth and advance in faith and practice, Heb. 5:12-14. In the former, we consider that when we speak of justification as perfect in this life, or say that all are equally justified, we mean that when God forgives one sin, he forgives all, Rom. 8:1. Sanctification, on the other hand, being far from equal in all, is never in this life perfect in any, 1 John 1:8, 10; instead it must be understood to be progressive, 2 Cor. 7:1; and, therefore, it is something not perfect but a growing up to perfection, Phil. 3:12-14.

Question 3—*What are some of the benefits which flow from justification, adoption and sanctification?*

Answer—First, we must consider the benefit of assurance, the kinds of which are two: 1.) Objective assurance, whereby the special love of God to a saint, and his eternal salvation, are sure in themselves, 2 Tim. 2:19. This is never wanting, though the child of God know it or not, Rev. 1:5. 2.) Subjective assurance, whereby a child of God is assured that God loves him with a special love, and that he shall certainly partake of eternal glory, Gal. 2:20. This is not a wavering hope, or conjecture, but an infallible certainty, Eph. 4:30.

This assurance is such that a child of God may attain: 1.) By comparing the book of God and the book of his own soul, he may know that he is called and elected, 2 Pet. 1:10. 2.) He may be assured that he has inherent grace, that he believes as surely as he breathes, 2 Tim. 1:12. 3.) It is the office of the Spirit of God to assure believers of this, 2 Cor. 5:5. 4.) Many of the saints have attained it, Job 19:25.

In the nature of this assurance, we may find several things: 1.) The Spirit shining on his own word, particularly the promises, in the Bible, the child of God firmly believes them, Heb. 6:11, 12. 2.) The Spirit shining on his own work of grace in the believer's heart, the believer discerns it, 1 Cor. 2:12. 3.) The Spirit of the Lord sometimes gives a joint testimony with the spirits of the saints, to the truth of that conclusion, Rom. 8:16.

Second, we must consider the benefit of peace of conscience, Rom. 5:1, 2, 5; wherein there are two things: 1.) The subject of this peace, is the purged conscience, Heb. 9:14. Peace and purity go together, and make a good conscience, 1 Tim. 1:5. Wherein there is both removal of guilt, felt or unfelt, which binds the soul over to God's wrath, Ps. 32:1; as well as the removal of the conscience of guilt, in the sense of pardon, Heb. 10:2. 2.) There

are the parts of that peace which are; *first*, an inward calm of soul, and quietness of mind, wherein it is not disturbed with fears of God's wrath, nor the judgments deserved by those sins, Prov. 1:33. *Second*, consolation and comfort of heart, 2 Cor. 1:12; Isa. 57:19.

This peace of conscience is obtained for them by Jesus Christ dying and suffering to procure it, Isa. 53:5. This is obtained by them: 1.) By a believing application of the blood of Christ, Rom. 15:13. 2.) By God's speaking peace thereupon to the soul, Isa. 57:19.

Third, we must consider the benefit of joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14:17. This benefit is: 1.) Peculiar to the saints, who only are blessed with spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, Phil. 3:3. 2.) Not a benefit the saints have at all times, Ps. 51:8.

The objects of this joy are several: 1.) God in Christ, Rom. 5:11. 2.) Those less principal objects, which are twofold: a.) The precious spiritual privileges, which they enjoy in this present life, Isa. 61:10; b.) The precious privileges they have in hope, Rom. 5:2.

Fourth, we must consider the benefit of increase of grace, Prov. 4:18. Grace is a holy seed that springs and grows, Mark 4:27. God has appointed the stature unto which his children must grow, Eph. 4:13.

The Christian grows in grace in four ways: 1.) Inward, into Christ, as the branch does into the stock, Eph. 4:15. 2.) Outward, in good works, in all the parts of a holy life, piety towards God, and righteousness towards men, Gen. 49:22. 3.) Upward, in a heavenly disposition, Phil. 3:20. 4.) Downward, in humility, self-denial, self-loathing, resignation to the will of the Lord, Job 42:5, 6.

Fifth, we must consider the benefit of perseverance to the end, 1 John 5:13. The saints of God cannot lose grace totally or finally, 1 Pet. 1:5.

The grounds of this perseverance are: 1.) The unchangeable decree of God's election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of the Father to them, Jer. 31:3. 2.) The merit and intercession of Christ the Son, 1 Pet. 1:18, 19. 3.) The perpetual abiding of the Spirit in and with them, John 14:16. 4.) The nature of the covenant of grace, Jer. 32:40.