



# John Calvin's *Institutes in the Christian Religion* (1541)

A PPA Seminar: Fall 2017

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**Study 10: Chapter Six: Justification by Faith and the Merits of Works**

**Read pgs. 351-428**

*“We accept and possess Jesus Christ by faith as He is presented to us by God’s goodness, and by partaking of Him we receive grace twice over. First, being by His sinlessness reconciled to God, instead of a Judge in heaven to condemn us we have a most merciful Father. Second, we are sanctified by His Spirit, so that we may turn our minds to holiness and innocence of life.”*

*Prayer: “May the LORD grant that we may be engaged in the mysteries of His Heavenly wisdom with a true increase of piety, for His glory, and for our edification. Amen.”*

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 32:1-2; Romans 3:23-31; 4:1-25; Galatians 3:7-24; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 3:8-9; James 2:16-24**

1. Why is the “chief article” of the Christian religion justification by faith? Define justification by faith as fully as you can from your reading. What are the practical implications of this biblical doctrine? [pgs. 351-56]
2. How does Roman Catholic theology effectually turn “grace” into works? Why does Roman Catholicism agree that one is justified by faith, but not by faith ‘alone’? Argue briefly from the Roman Catholic position, now compare it with Calvin’s position. What are the important implications of this? [pgs. 353-58]
3. How is Christ all the righteousness a sinner will ever need? List as many scriptures with references to support this. Give thanks to God from the heart and live wholeheartedly for Him! [pgs. 358-360]
4. How does God’s perfect purity and holiness help us to see our need for Christ? How can we all be tempted to self-justification? Give an example from Scripture; give an example from your own life. [pgs. 361-66]

5. What are the two things that Calvin says that sinners must bear in mind concerning God’s glory and man’s conscience when considering justification by faith? [pgs. 367-70]
  
6. List and define the four categories that Calvin specifies with regard to the attainment of righteousness in this life. In which category would you place yourself? [pgs. 371-97]
  - i. \_\_\_\_\_:
  - ii. \_\_\_\_\_:
  - iii. \_\_\_\_\_:
  - iv. \_\_\_\_\_:
  
7. What good can the spiritually dead accomplish? Explain. [pgs. 373-79]
  
8. Can the works of believers ever be accepted as meritorious before God? Why, or why not? What is the Roman Catholic teaching of ‘Works of Supererogation’? [pgs. 378-90]
  
9. If a person is justified by faith alone, will good works necessarily follow? Can one truly be justified by faith without works? Why, or why not? Explain from Scripture. [pgs. 390-98]
  
10. In what sense does God accept man’s works that are according to His commandments? In what sense can believers call their works “righteous” and characterize themselves as “righteous”? [pgs. 399-410]
  
11. Compare and contrast the Apostle James and the Apostle Paul on justification by faith and works. How might they use the word “justify” differently? Take time to think about this this because there has been much misunderstanding that has come from this. [pgs. 410-16]
  
12. How does God use rewards and blessings now and in heaven in relation to the believer’s good works? [pgs. 416-28]