

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS

WEEK 36

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

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

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

MONDAY

Praise: Sing Psalm 116B

Scripture: Read Romans 5:1-5; Isaiah 32:17

Key Thought: *Believers can be assured of God's love.*

Questions:

- ☞ What are the three main benefits that those who are effectually called partake of in this life?
- ☞ How are the benefits listed in this week's question made secondary to the three main benefits?
- ☞ What benefits does Romans 5:1-5 list as flowing from justification?
- ☞ What is meant by "assurance of God's love"?
- ☞ Do all believers, at all times, have assurance of God's love? Why?
- ☞ How would a true understanding of justification, adoption, and sanctification lead to assurance of God's love?

Prayer

Notes: This question addresses the secondary benefits that accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification. Remind your children of the three main benefits just listed. Show them in the *Catechism* answer that the benefits listed are secondary in that they are derived from the three main benefits. One cannot be saved without being justified, adopted, and sanctified, but a true believer may lack assurance, or peace, or joy in the Holy Spirit, at least for a time. Walk your children through Romans 5:1-5. Identify some of the benefits that Paul says flow from justification. Discuss the reason that there are times when genuine believers lack the assurance that God loves them. Sometimes guilt over a besetting sin makes a Christian feel unlovable and forsaken. Sometimes a lack of knowledge concerning God's power and purpose leaves a believer uncertain about his standing before God. Show them how a proper understanding of justification, adoption, and sanctification can strengthen the assurance of God's love in the hearts of believers.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 116B

Scripture: Read Romans 2:14-15; Hebrews 9:11-14; 10:14-23

Key Thought: *Believers can have peace of conscience.*

Questions:

- ☞ Can a person have true peace apart from Christ?
- ☞ Where does peace come from?
- ☞ What is the conscience?
- ☞ What is wrong with the conscience of Adam's descendants?
- ☞ What must happen for our conscience to be at peace?
- ☞ How does a peaceful conscience flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?

Prayer

Notes: The second benefit flowing from justification, adoption, and sanctification is peace of conscience. This implies that apart from salvation our conscience is not at peace. Remind your children that the Scriptures teach that those who do not have Christ are at war with God, with their neighbors, and within themselves. Show them that true peace comes only from God the Father (who is called the God of peace), God the Son (who is called the Prince of Peace), and God the Holy Spirit (who brings forth the fruit of peace). Explain that the conscience is that inner sense of right and wrong that accuses us when we commit sin. We cannot bring peace to our own conscience because we are sinners by nature and even our understanding of sin is corrupt. But thanks be to God that when He forgives our guilt (justification), and cleanses our hearts (sanctification), He brings genuine peace to our conscience. We can rest in the fact that Jesus has reconciled us to God and when we see the evidence of sanctification in our lives, our conscience assures us that we are His children.



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 116B

Scripture: Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2-7

Key Thought: *Believers can have joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Questions:

- ☞ Are happiness and joy the same thing? Why or why not?
- ☞ How can Paul mention affliction and joy together in verse 6?
- ☞ How is "joy in the Holy Spirit" different from worldly joy?
- ☞ Where does a believer find his greatest joy? (see Ps. 43:4)
- ☞ What kinds of things take away our joy?
- ☞ Does your heart seek its joy in God or look for happiness from the world?

Prayer

Notes: The third benefit flowing from justification, adoption, and sanctification is joy in the Holy Spirit. Explain to your children that there is a difference between happiness and joy. Happiness is being pleased because something good has happened. It is a reaction to circumstances. Joy, on the other hand, is an inward sense of satisfaction and gladness that comes from the sense of God's love and favor. Joy does not depend on outward circumstances, but on the inward knowledge that God works all things for His glory and the good of His people. Such knowledge enables the believer to have true joy, even in the midst of terrible trials, since he knows that God's glory is more important and desirable than his own immediate happiness. The believer's greatest joy is found in the Lord Himself, through the knowledge and experience of His revelation. The more that we grow in our comprehension of His perfect love for us, as seen in justification, adoption, and sanctification, the more our hearts will be joyful before Him. True joy in the Holy Spirit is not finding pleasure in self-fulfillment, but finding pleasure in the being and acts of God.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 116B

Scripture: Read Proverbs 4:18; 2 Peter 3:14-18; Matthew 13:18-23

Key Thought: *Believers can have increase of grace.*

Questions:

- ☞ Is a Christian ever finished growing in grace?
- ☞ What kinds of things interfere with the growth of grace?
- ☞ What signs of growth in grace should we look for in our lives?
- ☞ What means does God use to cause us to grow in grace?
- ☞ Is growth in grace automatic for the Christian? If not, how does it happen?

Prayer

Notes: The fourth benefit that flows from justification, adoption, and sanctification is the increase of grace. In Proverbs 4:18, Solomon describes the life of those who are justified as "shining ever brighter." The Christian never reaches a place in this life where he stops growing in grace. There are several things that tend to get in the way of growth in grace. The parable of the sower highlights such things as lack of understanding, a shallow response to tribulation and persecution, and preoccupation with the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. If left unchecked, these things will choke out growth altogether, revealing a heart that has never truly received the Word of God. True growth in grace is evidenced by fruit in the life of the Christian, which takes the form of personal spiritual progress followed by a more effective testimony for Christ in the world. Explain to your children that growth in grace does not happen automatically (that is, apart from our effort). God has appointed certain means for producing growth

in us (the Scriptures, prayer, worship, the sacraments, fellowship) but He has also ordained that we must apply ourselves to these means in order to experience growth.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 116B

Scripture: Read 1 Peter 1:3-9

Key Thought: *Believers will persevere in grace unto the end.*

Questions:

- ☞ Does our salvation depend upon anything that we do?
- ☞ Can we do anything to lose our salvation?
- ☞ What does Peter mean when he says we are “kept by the power of God through faith for salvation”? How does He keep us?
- ☞ How do the doctrines of justification, adoption, and sanctification lead to the benefit of perseverance?

Prayer

Notes: The fifth and final benefit that flows from justification, adoption, and sanctification is perseverance in grace until the end. Remind your children that our salvation does not depend on anything we do. This being the case, there is nothing that we can do to lose our salvation if God determines to redeem us. This does not mean that a Christian can go on sinning willfully because he knows God will not cast him away. One who has that kind of attitude shows that he is no true Christian at all. Peter tells us that we are “kept by the power of God,” which means that it is His strength that assures us of our inheritance. We are saved by His strength and we continue through His strength. Perseverance flows from justification since it is not compatible with God’s righteousness to punish our sins in Christ and then turn around and punish us for them again. It flows from adoption since God does not receive us into His family only to cast us out into the street when we stumble. It accompanies sanctification since God promises that “He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Phil. 1:6) Praise God for the promise of Christ that none who are truly His shall ever be snatched from His hand.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.