

On-Mission Class #9

Christ Proclamation Church; Sunday, May 20, 2018; Steve Thiel

I. Welcome

- Tonight's Goal – Lecture and Discussion – Theology and Practice
 1. Wayne Grudem – Chs. 14-15 – Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, and Perseverance
 2. Don Whitney's "*Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*" – Ch. 11 on Journaling
- Next Month – "*The People of God*" – Trevor Joy and Spence Shelton – June 17th at 6:00pm

II. "*Christian Beliefs*" by Wayne Grudem

A. Chapter 14 – What Are Justification And Adoption? – (p.95)

1. Justification Is a Legal Declaration of God

- **[Definition]** – Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which He (1) thinks of our sins as forgiven and thinks of Christ's righteousness as belonging to us and therefore (2) declares us to be "just" or morally righteous in His sight.
- In the order of salvation, justification comes after faith and repentance.
- **[Romans 3:26]** – "*It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*"
- **[Romans 5:1]** – "*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"
- **[Galatians 2:16]** – "*yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.*"
- If justification is by faith alone, and not works – what do we do then with James 2:24?
- **[James 2:24]** – "*You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.*"
- You have to understand that **[James 2:24]** is in the context of an argument that starts in **[James 2:14]** – Notice the initial question – "*What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?*" – So James is arguing here that the only kind of faith that saves is a faith that works. Therefore, faith alone in Paul is equivalent to faith that results in works for James.

2. Justification That We Are Righteous Before God

- Justification is a legal declaration by God – so it's God acting as a judge, declaring that an individual is righteous in His sight. If God has declared you righteous in His sight, then you do not have to pay the penalty for your past, present, or future sins.
- The opposite of justification is condemnation – **[Romans 8:1]** – "*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*"
- How does that work? – **[2 Corinthians 5:21]** – "*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*"

3. Justification by Faith Alone

- **[Romans 3:23-25]** – "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*"
- **[Ephesians 2:8-10]** – "*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*"

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- The doctrine of justification was the central difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics at the time of the Reformation, which began with Martin Luther in 1517.
 - Protestants insisted that justification was by “*faith alone*” while Roman Catholics responded that justification was by faith plus the “*means of grace*” found in the sacraments of the church (baptism, confirmation, the Lord’s Supper and penance).
4. Adoption: Membership in a New Family
- **[Definition]** – Adoption is the process of God making us members of His family.
 - Now, what I think is so glorious, is that “*justification*” is a very legal, judicial, clinical and formal reality whereas “*adoption*” is very relational, informal, and a familial term.
 - **[John 1:12]** – “*He came to his own, and his own did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*”
 - **[Romans 8:14-17]** – “*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*”

B. Chapter 15 – What Are Sanctification And Perseverance? – (p.99)

1. Sanctification Is A Process

- **[Definition]** – Sanctification is a progressive work of both God and man that makes Christians more and more free from sin and more and more like Christ in their lives.
- Since sanctification is a process, we will never be completely free from sin in this life.
- **[Justification]** – Means being freed from the penalty of sin.
- **[Sanctification]** – Means being freed from the power of sin.
- **[Glorification]** – Means being freed from the presence of sin.
- **[Romans 6:5-14]** – “*For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore, do not let reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*”
- **[2 Corinthians 3:18]** – “*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,^[e] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.^[f] For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*”
- **[Philippians 3:13-14]** – “*Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*”

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2. God's Role in Sanctification

- **[1 Thessalonians 5:23-24]** – *“Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”*

3. Our Role in Sanctification

- **[Romans 8:13]** – *“For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”*
- **[Philippians 2:12-13]** – *“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”*

4. What If The Sanctification Process Ends?

- All true Christians should expect growth in sanctification during their lifetimes.
- But what if that process seems to end? And if it ends, what does it mean? Does it mean that we, who once were Christians, are now no longer Christians?
- All who are truly Christians will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives.
- **[1 Peter 1:3-7]** – *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*
- **[2 Peter 2:8-11]** – *“For if these qualities^[7] are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*
- But what if some fall away from their profession of faith and live a life active rebellion against God? With respect to such cases, we have to say that only those who persevere until the end are truly Christians.

5. Perseverance of the Saints

- The promises of Jesus that all true Christians will persevere in the faith.
- **[John 6:38-40]** – *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”*
- Jesus promises that He will lose none that the Father has given to Him!

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- **[John 10:27-29]** – “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, ^[a] is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”
- 6. The Promise of the Holy Spirit
 - **[Ephesians 1:13-14]** – “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”
- 7. The Promise in Perseverance
 - While those who are truly Christians will persevere to the end, only those who persevere to the end are truly Christians.
 - **[John 8:31-32]** – “So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” – Now, what’s interesting is that these Jews didn’t actually persevere.
 - **[John 8:59]** – “They picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself.”
- 8. Assurance of Perseverance
 - Present trust in Christ for salvation is NOT the only thing that provides assurance.
 - Evidence of the ongoing work of God in your lives also provides assurance.
 - The longer you walk by faith and the more growth that you see in your life, the more confidence you have in your salvation and the greater amount of assurance you’ll have.
 - **[2 Peter 2:8-11]** – “For if these qualities ^[1] are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”
- 9. Persevering Through the Process
 - Sanctification is a lifelong process.

III. “Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life” by Don Whitney

A. Chapter 11 – Journaling for the Purpose of Godliness – (p.249)

- Read p.254 – Help in Meditation
- Read p.257 – Help in Expressing Thoughts and Feelings to the Lord
- Discuss the chapter together in your small group.
- Practice Journaling on Psalm chapter 1 – Suggestion of 10-15 minutes

IV. Closing Comments

- Next Meeting – Sunday, June 17th – 6:00pm to 8:30pm
- “The People of God” – Trevor Joy and Spence Shelton – Read The Whole Book