

Sola Fide – Faith Alone

November 27, 2016
Luke 18:9-14

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)
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WCF XI: I. Those whom God effectually calls, He also freely justifies; not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God. II. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

Faith Alone – the very essence of Christianity:

- Gospel = Great Exchange. Christianity is the doctrine of Divine accomplishment. Faith alone vs. works-righteousness: Rom 4:4-5
- By trusting Christ alone for justification by faith alone not works
- Trying to establish or maintain righteousness on our own means rather than by faith we receive the terrible wages due those who fall short of perfection: Rom 6:23; Jam 2:10
- Don't make Israel's mistake of abandoning justification by faith - Rm 10:3

We must defend Biblical Justification on 2 fronts:

1) No-lordship theology

- makes obedience to law optional
- makes God's salvation merely a declarative act
- Downplays spiritual regeneration 2:Cor 5:17
- discounts moral effects of believer's new heart Ezek 36:26-27
- tends to make sanctification depend on own efforts
- tends to make forensic aspect of justification as if this were the only essential aspect of salvation

2) Blending Faith & Works for Justification

- When justification is fused with sanctification –our works become an essential aspect of our salvation –rather than evidence!
- Error of Galatians 2:16; 5:4. Different Gospel: Gal 1:6,9
- Error of most every false cult –add something to Christ's work
- Error of Roman Catholicism - through works Christ's righteousness is infused to us
- Danger of 'New Perspective on Paul' - keep law to stay in covenant

The Gospel According to Jesus!

Lk 18:9-14

- Believe – John 5:24
- Thief on Cross - Lk 23:43 - belief alone.
- Healings were physical evidence of Jesus' power to forgive sin: Mt 9:5-6
- Jesus often noted faith of healed: Mt 9:22; Mk 5:34, 10:52; Lk 8:48; 17:19; 18:42
- Parable of A Sinner Justified by Faith: Lk 18:9-14
- Shocking – self-righteous: trusted in themselves 18:9
- God's standard perfection: Mt 5:20, 48 not humanly possible
- Tax-gatherer justified instantly! Lk 18:14
- Simply declared his sinfulness, pleaded for Divine mercy! {isn't that too easy?}
- Looked to God to do what he could not do for himself
- Salvation is:
 - A Judicial Act of God - Lk 18:14; Rm 5:1
 - Received by Faith Alone - {faith will always produce works Jms 2:24}
 - An Imputed (attribute to) Righteousness - Remember Mt 5:20,48
 - A righteousness that is NOT our own - Phil 3:9

For Thought & Discussion:

- Read the Westminster Confession Chp XI, does it summarize the biblical tension on justification?
- Can a person be 'saved' and live like the devil? So how does Scripture relate faith & works? Gal 5:6; James 2:17, 22, 26
- Read Rom 9:30-10:3. How does Israel's failures warn us to receive salvation by faith alone? What did they attempt to do?
- Discuss & review the two attacks against Biblical Justification by faith alone: No-lordship theology & Blending Faith & Works for Justification. How easy is it to fall prey to either view? What types of statements or thinking promote this?
- According to Jesus what is necessary to be saved? Mt 5:20, 48. Can anyone achieve that?
- How does imputed righteousness or salvation by faith alone solve this problem? 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 3:9