

WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE? by J. V. Fesko

TO THE READER: A good learning technique is to answer the following questions BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, you can refine your answers based on your reading. Then, when your group gathers, each can discuss his or her view and you can either affirm or modify what you wrote.

1. How would you answer the title's question, "What is justification by faith alone?" Think through this and try not to give a quick and simple answer. (5-7)
2. In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve stole a piece of fruit and disobeyed God. Why would this simple act be considered so atrocious as to warrant spending an eternity in hell? (8-11)
3. In the story of Noah and the Flood, we see all three ways God deals with man. How would you explain each in light of Noah's situation? (11-13)

Justice – is getting _____ you deserve –

Mercy – is _____ getting _____ you deserve –

Grace – is getting what you _____ deserve –
4. Read Genesis 15 slowly and carefully. Today the word *covenant* could be thought of as a binding contract or agreement between the two parties signing the agreement. Here God is making a covenant between Himself and Abraham, but who signs this contract? What difference does that make? (13-16)

5. Read Romans 5:12-21. Fill in the chart comparing what we got from Adam and from Jesus. (17-23)

THE COMPARISON OF THE TWO COVENANT HEADS: ADAM AND CHRIST		
	ADAM	CHRIST
5:15	Adam's act of transgression brought death to all he represented.	Christ's act of grace brought the gift of life to all He represented.
5:16		
5:17		
5:18		
5:19		
5:20		
5:21		

6. If all of our sins (past, present, and future) are all forgiven (which they are), then why can't we live any way we want? (27-29)

7. When you consider all God has done for us, what can we do to make Him "proud" of us? (29-30)

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

APPLICATION

God the Holy Spirit has been given a job to do in the life of everyone one of us who believe –to mold us into the likeness of Jesus (Romans 8:29). One way He does this is by growing the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives. How well are you growing in this Fruit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23? As you go over the chart on the following pages, figure out where you are on each. Make a plan you can prayerfully follow over the next year. As part of that plan, take a concordance and look up every reference to each part of the fruit to learn more about what it takes to be like it. At this same time next year, see if you have grown by at least one increment. If not, don't be discouraged, the Holy Spirit will continue His work to see this happen.

For Further Study

Justification: Understanding the Classic Reformed Doctrine, J.V. Fesko. P&R, 2008.

Justification by Grace through Faith: Finding Freedom from Legalism, Lawlessness, Pride, and Despair. P&R Publishing, 2008.

The Fruit of the Spirit is..., J. V. Fesko. Evangelical Press, 2011.

Find this and more at www.pcabookstore.com.

PLAN YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

LOVE

How do you evaluate your ability to love unconditionally?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...

JOY

How do you evaluate your ability to “count it all joy”?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...

PEACE

How do you evaluate your relationship with 1) God, and 2) others?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...

PATIENCE

How do you evaluate the degree to which you are maintaining balance with 1) God, and 2) others?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...

KINDNESS

How do you evaluate your ability to be wise and discerning in this area?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...

GOODNESS

How satisfied are you with the way your life reflects the life of Jesus to others?

Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

Between now and this time next year, I plan to improve in this area by ...
