

Of Justification, Part 2 (Romans 3:27-31)

Baptist Confession of Faith (1689) Chapter 11, Paragraph 2

Doctrine

Defining Faith

- **Faith** is receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness as our only Saviour.
- We **receive** Christ, in our belief that He died on our behalf.
- We **rest** on Christ and His righteousness, in our trust that He has fully satisfied all of my sins and the wrath of God.

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 7, Question 21: *What is true faith?* It is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word; but also an hearty trust, which the Holy Spirit works in me by the gospel, that not only to others, but to me also, forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness, and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits.

- True Faith requires true **knowledge** of our sinfulness, God's redeeming work accomplished by the Lord Christ Jesus, and how we are to respond in faith and repentance.

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 1, Question 2: *How many things are necessary for you to know, that you in this comfort may live and die happily?* Three things. First, the greatness of my sin and misery. Second, how I am redeemed from all my sins and miseries. Third, how I am to be thankful to God for such redemption.

- True Faith requires true **belief** that what God has said and done is, in fact, true.
- True Faith requires true **trust** that it is the only Saviour is the Lord Jesus Christ, because of His perfect life, substitutionary death, and bodily resurrection.

Faith as the Only Instrument of Justification.

- Faith is the **means** by which the cleansing blood and righteousness of Christ is imputed to the elect.

- There is no other righteousness (intrinsic or extrinsic) that is imputed to the believer, and there is no other way in which the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the elect but through **faith**.
- Even the faith by which we receive and rest on Christ is a **gift**, apportioned out according to the will of God, applied by the Holy Spirit.
- The biblical use of 'faith' is **narrow** in its scope and purpose, reserved for believers regarding their reliance on the promises of God.

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 23, Question 61: *Why do you say, that you are righteous only by faith?* Not that I am acceptable to God on account of the worthiness of my faith; but because only the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is my righteousness, before God, and I can receive the same and make it my own in no other way than by faith.

The Outworking of Faith

'It is therefore faith alone which justifies, and yet the faith which justifies is not alone: just as it is the heat alone of the sun which warms the earth, and yet in the sun it is not alone, because it is constantly conjoined with light'. – John Calvin, *Acts of the Council of Trent* (1547)

- Faith is accompanied by **repentance**, the turning from sin and turning in obedience to Christ.
- True faith is not **dead**, but is ever accompanied by other saving graces, that is, the benefits of Christ and the fruits of the Spirit.
- The outworking of our faith is love for God, demonstrated in **obedience**.

Other Cross-References:

Hebrews 11; Ephesians 2:4-10; Galatians 5:2-6; James 2:14-26; Romans 4-6

Application:

- 1) **Faith:** True receiving and resting on Christ and His righteousness.
- 2) **Obedience:** The outworking of faith because of our love for God.