

- Q32. What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?
A32. **They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them.**

Scripture References: Romans 8:30; Ephesians 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30

DQ1: What is justification?

DQ2: What is adoption?

DQ3: What is sanctification?

DQ4: Do those effectually called necessarily partake in these benefits?

DQ5: When do the benefits to those effectually called accrued?

DQ6: When do the benefits to those effectually called experienced?

Notes:

The Bible tells us very clearly that there are significant and inevitable benefits of effectual calling. The call of God initiates a whole string of benefits. But, without God's calling, these benefits cannot be had. These benefits appear to be sequential especially the way the benefits are described in Romans 8:30. In some sense, they are sequential just as the sequence is described. These benefits, however, are to be experienced and related to as an act of God being worked out in the lives of those who have been effectually called. Put differently, effectual calling is how God, whose plan is established before the foundation of this world, invites and permits man to begin to see and enjoy the relationship with God. Effectual calling is the very first experience that man has in terms of being able to recognize the touch of God, or the redemptive hand of God.

Unfathomable is the truth that, by the time God touches us, i.e., effectually calls us, God's plan of justification is complete for justification is a judicial act of God imputing the righteousness and holiness of Jesus Christ based upon His free and sovereign grace receivable by true faith alone. It is by effectual calling that we are ushered into the marvelous sequential process of Romans 8:30. So, in this sense, calling and justification are intertwined and cannot be separated.

As with justification, adoption is also a judicial act of God which bestows upon those effectually called to enjoy a distinct status and benefits of God's kingdom. Adoption is possible only because it is made possible by God who receives those effectually called to become members of His household. Adoption, too, then is an act of God's grace. It is readily understandable that no one can force his way into become a son. The father has to accept and adopt the son judicially before a man can be his son. Effectually called receives the benefit of such privileges of a legitimate son.

What about sanctification? If justification and adoption are acts of God's grace, then is sanctification also an act of God? The answer is yes. We will more closely look at each sequence

of Romans 8:30 in the later studies. Suffice it to say that man cannot sanctify himself – only God can. As God sanctifies those effectually called, man begins to exhibit and reveal the sanctifying work of God in him. We will talk more about the role of man in sanctification in the future.

A careful reading of Romans 8:30 will lead us to the conclusion that those effectually called will by necessity encounter and experience the sequential benefits of justification, adoption and sanctification. Thus, to be effectually called is to say that our benefits are locked in once and for all. We will study each sequence both from God's perspective and from man's perspective.

When do the benefits accrue? Is it at the moment when God effectually calls us? Let's review how the Shorter Catechism defined "effectual calling."

Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

When do we experience the benefits of effectual calling? We will study it from the chart.

Westminster Confession of Faith
CHAPTER X
Of Effectual Calling

1. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call,[a] by his Word and Spirit,[b] out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ;[c] enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God,[d] taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh;[e] renewing their wills, and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good,[f] and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ:[g] yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.[h]

[a]. Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:28, 30; Rom. 11:7; Eph. 1:5, 11; II Tim. 1:9-10

[b]. II Thess. 2:13-14; James 1:18; II Cor. 3:3, 6; I Cor. 2:12

[c]. II Tim. 1:9-10; I Pet. 2:9; Rom. 8:2; Eph. 2:1-10

[d]. Acts 26:18; I Cor. 2:10, 12; Eph. 1:17-18; II Cor. 4:6

[e]. Ezek. 36:26

[f]. Ezek. 11:19; Deut. 30:6; Ezek. 36:27; John 3:5; Titus 3:5; I Pet. 1:23

[g]. John 6:44-45; Acts 16:14

[h]. Ps. 110:3; John 6:37; Matt. 11:28; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 6:16-18; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29

2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man,[i] who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit,[k] he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.[l]

[i]. II Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 9:11

[k]. I Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7-9; Titus 3:4-5

[l]. John 6:37; Ezek. 36:27; I John 5:1; cf. I John 3:9

3. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit,[m] who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth:[n] so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.[o]

[m]. Gen. 17:7; Luke 18:15-16; Acts 2:39; John 3:3, 5; I John 5:12; see Luke 1:15

[n]. John 3:8

[o]. John 16:7-8; I John 5:12; Acts 4:12

4. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word,[p] and may have some common operations of the Spirit,[q] yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved:[r] much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the laws of that religion they do profess.[s] And to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.[t]

[p]. Matt. 13:14-15; Acts 28:24; cf. Acts 13:48; Matt. 22:14

[q]. Matt. 13:20-21; Matt. 7:22; Heb. 6:4-5

[r]. John 6:37, 64-66; John 8:44; John 13:18; cf. John 17:12

[s]. Acts 4:12; I John 4:2-3; II John 9; John 14:6; Eph. 2:12-13; John 4:22; John 17:3; Rom. 10:13-17

[t]. II John 9-11; I Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:6-8
