

- Q36. What are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification?
- A36. **The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification, are assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.**

Scripture References: Romans 5:1, 2, 5, 14:17; Colossians 1:10-11; Proverbs 4:18; Ephesians 3:16-18; 2 Peter 1:10, 3:18; Jeremiah 32:40; 1 John 2:19-27, 5:13; Revelations 14:12; 1 Peter 1:5; John 1:16; Philippians 1:6

DQ1: Do the benefits of God's grace accrued to man on this earth?

DQ2: What are the benefits of justification, adoption and sanctification?

DQ3: What is meant by "assurance of God's love"?

DQ4: What is meant by "peace of conscience"?

DQ5: What is meant by "joy in the Holy Ghost"?

DQ6: What is meant by "increase of grace"?

DQ7: What is meant by "perseverance therein to the end"?

DQ8: How are these benefits related to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 6:12-16?

Notes:

God's primary concern is eternal and eschatological in nature. God is most concerned about redemption of one soul and restoration of the relationship with Him so that the redeemed may dwell with Him eternally. This does not mean that certain benefits are available to the redeemed while on earth. In fact, significant benefits are available.

We must realize that justification, adoption and sanctification are direct benefits only available to the living. These benefits are absolute in nature and are directly tied with redemption. Therefore, these benefits are available to all elect. However, Q36 has a difference discussion in mind. It reveals the fact that there are real and tangible benefits to the redeemed while he lives on this earth. One might say that the benefits outlined in A36 are additional benefits.

The first real and tangible benefit of justification, adoption and sanctification is "assurance." Redeemed are equipped or gifted with assurance of God's love, an assurance not based on emotions but a conviction and decision that cannot be taken away by any outside factors or conditions.

The Bible testifies about many people of true faith and their assurances in God. Noah's assurances led him to build the ark for 100 years. Abraham's assurances led him to give his son, Isaac, as sacrifice on Mount Moriah as instructed by God. Moses' assurance allowed the Israelites to experience God's redemption from the hand of Pharaoh and the splitting of the Red Sea. David's assurances led him to not act on his own but only according to the will of God in

sparing the life king Saul and in facing Goliath in the battlefield, entitling him to be known as the man after God's own heart. Assurances of Daniel and his three friends led a gentile empire to God. The examples of assurances abound in the Bible.

Assurances are difficult to observe today but assurances displayed are simply beautiful to take it. Above all, assurances regarding God's love are of the highest benefit. When we are convinced of God's love of us, we can truly be satisfied with all things and under all circumstances. The satisfied with God's love will be able to love others as they experience internal margin and abundance that cannot be gotten from anywhere else. When you lack assurances regarding God's love, it is difficult to be gracious and merciful to others.

Assurances, by nature, do not depend upon the circumstances or situations. Assurances, fundamentally, are reassuring even when the circumstances and situations dictate otherwise. A life without assurance is a life filled with struggles. All of us unfortunately struggle in life because of lack of assurances on a daily basis.

The second real and tangible benefit of justification, adoption and sanctification is peace ("shalom"). The redeemed experience peace, not as the world can give or as commonly referred to as "a peace of mind." This is a special peace that cannot be taken away.

"Shalom" is a relational word. It describes a condition where there is absence of any conflict between God and man that can cause any stress or distress. Shalom is a declared state of relationship between God and man whereby all the problems and elements that inhibit such a relationship have been removed. With the assurances of God's love comes shalom. Shalom does not occur because of hard work of man. In fact, man's efforts bring about opposite conditions as they bring more pain and suffering. Shalom, then, is only experienced when it flows out of experiencing God's love. It is a special peace. We take a glimpse of it when we read of the joy of salvation in Psalm 51:11-12.

The third real and tangible benefit of justification, adoption and sanctification is perseverance. The elect or the redeemed are given the strength to overcome and outlast whatever hardships and troubles through the redemptive experiences in the Lord. God's people have been able to overcome the temptations, persevere the suffering, and even die for God because of it. All of this is possible because of God's gracious provision.

To persevere is like running a race. In an ordinary race, the runners are differentiated and designated as the winner of the first, second and third places. But, in the race to heaven, the winner is the one that perseveres, not the one that comes in first. When you come in does not matter as long as you come in having been equipped with the benefit of perseverance. What is significant is that fact that God grants such perseverance to them that are justified, adopted and sanctified so that they may be able to complete the race set out before them.

Awards await those who persevere to the end. The benefits of God's grace fall upon those who persevere to the end. The church of Christ is in the best position to know who perseveres and who do not. We see accounts of people having left the church in the early church history as recorded in the Book of Acts and Pauline Epistles. Therefore, we must pray for these benefits in earnest for it is the desire of God to grant these benefits to those who are justified, adopted and sanctified.

Finally, consider how these benefits related to the fruit of the Spirit as described in Galatians 6. Every believer would desire to be filled with the fruit of the Spirit. However, we cannot simply desire the fruit. Instead, we should desire the Holy Spirit as the fruit of the Spirit will inevitably become evident in us as the Holy Spirit works in us. All of the benefits of God's grace then come by the Holy Spirit....and in increasing measures.

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CHAPTER XV
Of Repentance unto Life

1. Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace,[a] the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.[b]

[a]. Acts 11:18; II Cor. 7:10; Zech. 12:10

[b]. Luke 24:47; Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21

2. By it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God,[c] purposing and endeavouring to walk with him in all the ways of His commandments.[d]

[c]. Ezek. 18:30-31; Ezek. 36:31; Isa. 30:22; Ps. 51:4; Jer. 31:18-19; Joel 2:12-13; Amos 5:15; Ps. 119:128; II Cor. 7:11; I Thess. 1:9

[d]. Ps. 119:6, 59, 106; II Kings 23:25; see Luke 1:6

3. Although repentance be not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof,[e] which is the act of God's free grace in Christ;[f] yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.[g]

[e]. Ezek. 36:31-32; Ezek. 16:61-63; Isa. 43:25

[f]. Hos. 14:2, 4; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7

[g]. Luke 13:3, 5; Mark 1:4; Acts 17:30-31

4. As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation;[h] so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.[i]

[h]. Rom. 6:23; Gal. 3:10; Matt. 12:36

[i]. Isa. 55:7; Rom. 8:1; Isa. 1:16-18

5. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavour to repent of his particular sins, particularly.[k]

[k]. Ps. 19:13; Matt. 26:75; Luke 19:8; I Tim. 1:13, 15

6. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof;[l] upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy;[m] so, he that scandalizeth his brother, or the church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession, and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended,[n] who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.[o]

[l]. Ps. 32:5-6; Ps. 51:1-14

[m]. Prov. 28:13; Isa. 55:7; I John 1:9

[n]. James 5:16; Luke 17:3-4; Josh. 7:19; see Matt. 18:15-18

[o]. II Cor. 2:7-8; see Gal. 6:1-2

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CHAPTER XVI

Of Good Works

1. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in His holy Word,[a] and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal, or upon any pretence of good intention.[b]

[a]. Mic. 6:8; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 13:21

[b]. Matt. 15:9; Isa. 29:13; I Pet. 1:18; John 16:2; Rom. 10:2; I Sam. 15:21-23; Deut. 10:12-13; Col. 2:16-17, 20-23

2. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith:[c] and by them believers manifest their thankfulness,[d] strengthen their assurance,[e] edify their brethren,[f] adorn the profession of the gospel,[g] stop the mouths of the adversaries,[h] and glorify God,[i] whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto,[k] that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.[l]

[c]. James 2:18, 22

[d]. Ps. 116:12-14; Col. 3:15-17; I Pet. 2:9

[e]. I John 2:3, 5; II Pet. 1:5-10

[f]. II Cor. 9:2; Matt. 5:16; I Tim. 4:12

[g]. Titus 2:5, 9-12; I Tim. 6:1

[h]. I Pet. 2:15

[i]. I Pet. 2:12; Phil. 1:11; John 15:8

[k]. Eph. 2:10

[l]. Rom. 6:22

3. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ.[m] And that they may be enabled thereunto, beside the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will, and to do, of his good pleasure:[n] yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.[o]

[m]. John 15:4-6; Rom. 8:4-14; Ezek. 36:26-27

[n]. Phil 2:13; Phil. 4:13; II Cor. 3:5; Eph. 3:16

[o]. Phil. 2:12; Heb. 6:11-12; II Pet. 1:3, 5, 10-11; Isa. 64:7; II Tim. 1:6; Acts 26:6-7; Jude 20-21

4. They who, in their obedience, attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.[p]

[p]. Luke 17:10; Neh. 13:22; Rom. 8:21-25; Gal. 5:17

5. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is

between us and God, whom, by them, we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins,[q] but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants:[r] and because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit:[s] and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.[t]

[q]. Rom. 3:20; Rom. 4:2, 4, 6; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; Rom. 8:18, 22-24; Ps. 16:2; Job 22:2-3; Job 35:7-8

[r]. Luke 17:10

[s]. Rom. 8:13-14; Gal. 5:22-23

[t]. Isa. 64:6; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 7:15, 18; Ps. 143:2; Ps. 130:3

6. Notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him;[u] not as though they were in this life wholly unblameable and unreproveable in God's sight;[w] but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.[x]

[u]. Eph. 1:6; I Pet. 2:5; see Exod. 28:38; Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4

[w]. Job 9:20; Ps. 143:2; I John 1:8

[x]. Heb. 13:20-21; II Cor. 8:12; Heb. 6:10; Matt. 25:21, 23; I Cor. 3:14; I Cor. 4:5

7. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands; and of good use both to themselves and others:[y] yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith;[z] nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word;[a] nor to a right end, the glory of God,[b] they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God:[c] and yet, their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God.[d]

[y]. II Kings 10:30-31; I Kings 21:27, 29; Luke 6:32-34; Luke 18:2-7; see Rom. 13:4

[z]. Heb. 11:4, 6; see Gen. 4:3-5

[a]. I Cor. 13:3; Isa. 1:12

[b]. Matt. 6:2, 5, 16; I Cor. 10:31

[c]. Prov. 21:27; Hag. 2:14; Titus 1:15; Amos 5:21-22; Mark 7:6-7; Hos. 1:4; Rom. 9:16; Titus 3:5

[d]. Ps. 14:4; Ps. 36:3; Matt. 25:41-45; Matt. 23:23; see Rom. 1:21-32

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CHAPTER XVII
Of the Perseverance of the Saints

1. They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.[a]

[a]. Phil 1:6; II Pet. 1:10; Rom. 8:28-30; John 10:28-29; I John 3:9; I John 5:18; I Pet. 1:5, 9

2. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father;[b] upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ,[c] the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them,[d] and the nature of the covenant of grace:[e] from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.[f]

[b]. Ps. 89:3-4, 28-33; II Tim. 2:18-19; Jer. 31:3

[c]. Heb. 10:10, 14; Heb. 13:20-21; Heb. 9:12-15; Rom. 8:33-39; John 17:11, 24; Luke 22:32; Heb. 7:25

[d]. John 14:16-17; I John 2:27; I John 3:9
[e]. Jer. 32:40; Ps. 89:34-37; see Jer. 31:31-34
[f]. John 6:38-40; John 10:28; II Thess. 3:3; I John 2:19

3. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins;[g] and, for a time, continue therein:[h] whereby they incur God's displeasure,[i] and grieve his Holy Spirit,[k] come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts,[l] have their hearts hardened,[m] and their consciences wounded;[n] hurt and scandalize others,[o] and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.[p]

[g]. Exod. 32:21; Jonah 1:3, 10; Ps. 51:14; Matt. 26:70, 72, 74
[h]. II Sam. 12:9, 13; Gal. 2:11-14
[i]. Num. 20:12; II Sam. 11:27; Isa. 64:7, 9
[k]. Eph. 4:30
[l]. Ps. 51:8, 10, 12; Rev. 2:4; Matt. 26:75
[m]. Isa. 63:17
[n]. Ps. 32:3-4; Ps. 51:8
[o]. Gen. 12:10-20; II Sam. 12:14; Gal. 2:13
[p]. Ps. 89:31-32; I Cor. 11:32

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CHAPTER XVIII
Of Assurance of Grace and Salvation

1. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favour of God, and estate of salvation[a] (which hope of theirs shall perish):[b] yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before him, may, in this life, be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace,[c] and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.[d]

[a]. Mic. 3:11; Deut. 29:19; John 8:41
[b]. Amos 9:10; Matt. 7:22-23
[c]. I John 5:13; I John 2:3; I John 3:14, 18-19, 21, 24
[d]. Rom. 5:2, 5

2. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope;[e] but an infallible assurance of faith founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation,[f] the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made,[g] the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God,[h] which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.[i]

[e]. Heb. 6:11, 19
[f]. Heb. 6:17-18
[g]. II Pet. 1:4-11; I John 2:3; I John 3:14; II Cor. 1:12
[h]. Rom. 8:15-16
[i]. Eph. 1:13-14; Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 1:21-22

3. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties, before he be partaker of it:[k] yet, being enabled by the

Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto.[l] And therefore it is the duty of every one to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure,[m] that thereby his heart may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance;[n] so far is it from inclining men to looseness.[o]

[k]. I John 5:13

[l]. I Cor. 2:12; I John 4:13; Heb. 6:11-12; Eph. 3:17-18

[m]. II Pet. 1:10

[n]. Rom. 5:1-2, 5; Rom. 14:17; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 1:3-4; Ps. 4:6-7; Ps. 119:32

[o]. I John 2:1-2; Rom. 6:1-2; Titus 2:11-12, 14; II Cor. 7:1; Rom. 8:1, 12; I John 3:2-3; Ps. 130:4; I John 1:6-7

4. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light:[p] yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may, in due time, be revived;[q] and be the which, in the mean time, they are supported from utter despair.[r]

[p]. Ps. 51:8, 12, 14; Eph. 4:30-31; Ps. 77:1-10; Ps. 31:22; cf. Matt. 26:69-72 and Luke 22:31-34

[q]. I John 3:9; Luke 22:32; Ps. 51:8, 12; see Ps. 73:15

[r]. Mic. 7:7-9; Jer. 32:40; Isa. 54:7-14; II Cor. 4:8-10