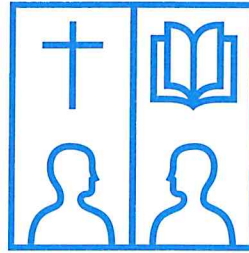


Question 32

What do justification and sanctification mean?



Answer

Justification means our declared righteousness before God. Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness.

Big Idea

God justifies those whom he has chosen and sanctifies his chosen people.

Aim

To help the children understand that justification and sanctification are both part of the Christian life, but that justification comes before sanctification.

Bible Passage

1 Peter 1:1-2

Memory Verse

“To those who are elect exiles . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.” (1 Pet. 1:1-2)

Virtue

Joy





Notes

Leader's Notes

Justification and *sanctification* are big Bible words that are sometimes hard for children to understand. It is important, however, that children understand these concepts, know the difference between them, and see the significance of their order in the Christian life and experience. This lesson will remind children that people are justified when they become Christians; they are legally declared righteous in the sight of God. The lesson will then explain to the children that sanctification follows justification. Sanctification is an internal supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in the Christians heart. This lesson aims to help the children recall what justification is and begin to understand the process of sanctification.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- Children can find the prospect of becoming more like Jesus a little worrying and confusing because they're unsure of how the process happens.
- The concept of the Holy Spirit coming to live in a Christian is puzzling for a child. Take time to explain that it is a supernatural process and not an actual person indwelling us. Children will clearly understand the physical realm, but they will still be growing in their understanding of the supernatural realm.
- Remember to mix and match the activities in the lesson to fit your time frame (see p. 12 for some sample outlines). You won't have time to do them all. Feel free to adapt each activity based on your class's strengths and weaknesses.

Leader's Prayer

Loving God, thank you that you have chosen and justified me. I praise you that you're sanctifying me through the power of the Holy Spirit. Please help me long to be more like Jesus and be obedient to you

for your glory. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they understand the significance of justification and long for the work of sanctification in their individual lives. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- 8 business size envelopes
- Poster board
- Index cards
- Glue or tape
- Two boxes
- Wrapping paper and tape
- The word *sanctification* printed on a sheet of paper



- The word *justification* printed on a sheet of paper
- Q32 Justification or Sanctification? (RB), several copies
- Wallpaper or butcher paper
- Markers

Notes

10 Catechism Recap

Seal eight business size envelopes, then cut each one in half so that you have sixteen open-ended pockets. Attach them to the poster board with the cut end up—four across and four down. In each pouch place a card. Leave four cards blank and write one of these sentences on each of the others:

- ZAP—Switch points with the other team.
- ZAP—Add two points to your team score.
- ZAP—Lose two points from your team score.
- ZAP—Both teams lose four points.
- ZAP—Your team's score goes back to zero.
- ZAP—The other team's score goes back to zero.

Keep score on two sheets of paper so that the scores can be swapped when that card is drawn.

Divide the group into two teams. Take turns to ask each team to recall the answer to a catechism question. Read a question, and the team must come up with the right answer. They have one chance to recite the answer. If they get the answer right, they get a chance to go to the board and pick a card out of one of the pouches. The teams will end up gaining, losing, switching, or totally zapping out! The team with the most points when all of the cards have been drawn wins. The aim of the game is to help the children have fun while reviewing the answers to the catechism questions.

5 Introduction to Question 32

You will need two boxes and gift wrap. Print the word *justification* on one sheet of paper and *sanctification* on another, and place one in each box. Wrap the boxes up and stick a number one on one box and a number two on the other.

Place the two boxes at the front of the classroom and ask the children if they're excited to see what's inside. Explain to the children that the boxes contain words that

describe two of God's great gifts to humans. Tell the children that the boxes must be opened in a certain order, though!

Invite a child to the front of the classroom to open box number one and pull out the word *justification*. Tell the children that justification is God's declaration that someone is righteous before him. Only God can justify, and the only reason he can justify



Notes

is because Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment that was due to guilty sinners. Justification is an amazing gift from God!

Invite another child up to open the second box, and remind the children that the boxes had to be opened in a special order. Pull out the word *sanctification*. Explain to the children that sanctification only happens after justification. When people are justified by God and saved from the punishment

they deserve, the Holy Spirit comes to live in them. As he lives in them, the Holy Spirit makes them more and more like Jesus. Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus.

Introduce the children to Question 32: “What do justification and sanctification mean?” Tell them that this lesson will help them to understand the act of justification and process of sanctification further.

10

Activity



Divide the children into small groups. Print out a copy of Q32 Justification or Sanctification? (RB) for each group.

Give each group a copy of “Justification or Sanctification?” Ask the children to discuss and figure out which relate to *justification* and which relate to *sanctification*. They should write an *S* by the words that refer to

sanctification and *J* by the words that are about justification.

After a few minutes take some time to discuss the words with the children and assess whether they’re beginning to understand the difference between justification and sanctification. Note: A few words relate to both.

15

Teaching Outline

Begin the teaching time by asking for God’s help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Ask the children why the gift-wrapped boxes needed to be opened in a certain order. Remind the children that only after a person is justified by God, through Christ, does the Holy Spirit come and live in him or her and begins the process of sanctification. Trying to simply live a good life or become more like Jesus without being justified will never

make anyone right with God. The process of sanctification begins after God has justified.

Ask the children if they often get asked what they want to be when they grow up.

Explain to the children that there are lots of wonderful things to do and become in God’s world, but the greatest desire Christians can have is to glorify God as they become more like Jesus. Ask the children how they think adults might respond if they answered the “what do you want to be when you grow up” question with “more like Jesus”?



Notes

Read 1 Peter 1:1–2. Provide Bibles for the children to read along with you.

Explain to the children that the apostle Peter is writing a special letter to Christians who are scattered abroad in different places and who are being persecuted because they love Jesus.

Explain that Peter is trying to encourage them by reminding them that they are very special to God. He refers to three works of God in the salvation of each believer:

1. Election
2. Justification
3. Sanctification

Invite the children to look at the two verses to see if they can identify what God the Father does, what God the Son does, and what God the Holy Spirit does.

1. Election: God the Father
2. Justification: God the Son
3. Sanctification: God the Holy Spirit

Remind the children of Question 27 and the fact that God chose which people he would justify and sanctify. That is what Peter is referring to when he addresses the exiled Christians as the “elect.” They are the ones that God chose to be his holy people. Peter is comforting the Christians who are being rejected for their faith by reminding them that they have been elected—chosen—by God!

In verse 2, Peter highlights the fact that the exiled Christians have been justified by God through the blood of Jesus. (Romans 5:9 may be a useful verse to refer to at this point in the lesson.) Christians are those who have been declared righteous once and for all. Their sin is fully dealt with. Help the children to imagine a court scene in which a criminal is standing before a judge in fear and trepidation, but the judge declares the criminal “not guilty.” Remind the children that’s exactly what happens to a Christian. Jesus the Redeemer pays the price for sin, and God declares the repentant sinner not guilty. The righteousness of Christ is given to the repentant sinner in exchange for his or her sin.

Peter also tells the exiled Christians that they are being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Ask the children if they can remember what sanctification is. Sanctification means our gradual, growing righteousness. Ask the children who does the work of sanctification in the lives of Christians. It is the Holy Spirit who works in the hearts of Christians to make them more like Jesus.

Explain to the children that sanctification is a lifelong process! They won’t suddenly wake up one morning and be fully like Jesus. The Holy Spirit will be at work in the heart of Christians until the day they go to be with Jesus.

Ask the children if they can think of why it might be a bad thing to mix up the order of justification and sanctification. Help them



to see that if sanctification comes before justification, then they will be trying to work their way into heaven rather than relying on the righteousness of Christ.

The exiled Christians would have received much comfort from this reminder from Peter, and that's exactly what he intended! He concludes verse 2 by saying "may grace and peace be multiplied to you," reminding them that being a Christian and the recipient of God's election, justification,

and sanctification brings continued grace and peace.

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 32 and the answer to memory.

(These notes are just for guidance. Please expand or amend them to suit your own children and context. Write out your talk in your own words and include illustrations and applications that you know will connect with your children.)

Activity



You will need a large sheet of paper, such as wallpaper or butcher paper. You'll also need plenty of markers.

Write "Becoming more like Jesus" across the top of a large sheet of paper. Remind the children that sanctification is the process of being set apart to become more like Jesus and that it begins after people have been justified.

Ask the children to write or draw things on the sheet of paper that signify what Jesus is like. Encourage them to portray Jesus's qualities that we can also have (for example, "loving" rather than "all-knowing.") After

a short period of time invite the children to return to their seats and discuss with them some of the things they've written or drawn on the paper. Explain to the children that Jesus is fully righteous and the process of sanctification is all about becoming righteous.

Remind the children that for all Christians, the purpose of life is to glorify God as we become more like Jesus. Tell the children that in a little while there will be a prayer time during which they can ask God to help them to become more like Jesus through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion and Question Time

Some questions that might arise include:

? How do I know I've been justified?

Explain to the children that if they've turned to God in repentance and

trusted Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins, they have been justified.

? I'm a Christian, but I still sin. Why am I not more like Jesus yet?



Remind the children that becoming a Christian doesn't mean that they become sinless, but rather, their desire to sin should be decreasing and their obedience to God increasing. Encourage the children that if they long to become more like Jesus, the Holy Spirit is at work in them.

? Will I be able to feel the Holy Spirit working?

Reassure the children by explaining that the work of the Holy Spirit is a great thing because it's making us more like Jesus. Explain that while there isn't a physical feeling that comes with the Holy Spirit's work, at times they will be aware that the Holy Spirit is at work because they will notice more of their sin and want to turn from it.

Also use this opportunity to help the children to think about their own lives and how this question and answer affects them personally.

- Ask the children if understanding justification and sanctification gives them hope and courage in the same way that Peter intended to encourage the exiled elect by his letter.
- Ask the children how the doctrine of justification might encourage them if people are unkind to them because they are Christians.
- Ask the children how they might explain the process of sanctification to a friend at school.

Notes



Virtue Vision



Joy

Ask the children if they think they would be joyful even if they were being persecuted like the Christians Peter was writing to.

Remind the children that joy is different from happiness. Joy is being confident in who God is and what he has done, is doing, and will do!

The Bible lists joy among the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22). As the Holy Spirit works on Christians through sanctification,

they will have increasing joy, even if their circumstances are not good.

Ask the children if they've ever known someone who showed a lot of joy even though he or she had a hard life.



Notes



Memory Activity

Print each word of the memory verse or catechism answer on a piece of paper, and then cut each word in half. Hide one half of each word around your classroom.

Give every child one half of a word from the memory verse or catechism answer. Instruct them to find the other half of their word, which is hidden somewhere in the

classroom. Once the children have found the other half of their word, ask them to put the Bible verse or catechism answer in the correct order. Read it through with the children. Then remove half of some of the words and read through it again. Finally remove full words and see if the children can remember the whole verse or answer.



Closing Prayer Time

Invite the children to pray that God would help them to become more like Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Encourage the children to think about specific areas of their lives where they long to become more like Jesus.