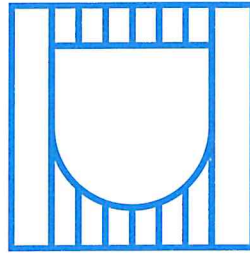


Question 35

Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through faith alone, where does this faith come from?



Answer

From the Holy Spirit.

Big Idea

The Holy Spirit is the means by which a person is washed, reborn, and regenerated.

Aim

To introduce the children to the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Bible Passage

Titus 3:1–7

Memory Verse

“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.” (Titus 3:4–6)

Virtue

Perseverance





Notes

Leader's Notes

This is the first of three questions that highlight the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. It is reasonably hard for children to understand exactly who the Holy Spirit is and what he does. This lesson will remind the children that salvation comes by grace alone through faith alone, and it will emphasize that the Holy Spirit grants faith to the repentant sinner. The lesson will remind the children that no one deserves God's grace and mercy, but in his kindness and great love, God rescues a people for himself through the death and resurrection of his precious Son. This is in contrast to all the other world religions, which require their followers to merit salvation.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- The person of the Holy Spirit is sometimes difficult for children to understand.
- Thinking about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer can be frightening for a child if it is not explained well.
- 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

Gracious God, thank you that, though I am so underserving, you chose to rescue me from sin and death by the power of the Holy Spirit as I was cleansed from my sin and given new life in Christ. I praise you for your

grace and mercy. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they understand and rejoice in the work of the Holy Spirit as the agent of salvation. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- White board (or large piece of paper) and white board marker
- Pad of large sticky notes
- Papier-mâché letters spelling FAITH (available at any craft store)
- An empty box that the papier-mâché letters will fit in
- A gift tag
- Wrapping paper (preferably gender-neutral baby wrapping paper)
- Q35 What We Were Word Search (RB), one for each child
- A small papier-mâché box for each child in the group
- Markers
- Tape



10 Catechism Recap

On the white board, outline a 4 x 5 grid. Make each box in the grid the same size as your sticky notes, so that the note covers the box. Write on the grid, in random order, both the question and answer for Questions 21–30. Cover each question and answer with a sticky note. Label the sticky notes with letters A–T.

Invite a child to select a letter from the board. Lift the sticky note with that letter

on it to reveal a question or an answer. Then ask the child to choose another letter to see if he or she can find the matching question or answer. If the child doesn't successfully find the match, the sticky notes are returned to cover up the words on the grid. If the child gets a match, he or she should hold on to the sticky notes. The aim of the game is to match all the question and answers. Keep playing until all the matches have been revealed.

5 Introduction to Question 35

You will need to place the papier-mâché letters in the box and wrap the box in the wrapping paper. Secure the gift tag to the outside of the box.

Explain to the children that you have a gift in the box. Invite them to guess what's in the box! Ask them if they'd like you to open the box. Once the box is opened, pull out the letters in the wrong order, and ask the children if they can figure out what they spell. Read out the gift tag for the children; it should say "To: New Christian, From: The Holy Spirit." Explain to the children that faith is a free gift from the Holy Spirit, and

it is given to every new Christian. Ask the children if they noticed anything about the wrapping paper. Tell the children that a new Christian is described as someone who has been born again and the Holy Spirit is the one who gives the gift of faith.

Introduce the children to Question 35: "Since we are redeemed by grace alone, through faith alone, where does this faith come from?" Explain to the children that this question will help them to understand a little more about the free gift of faith that comes from the Holy Spirit.

10 Activity



You will need a copy of the Q35 What We Were Word Search (RB) for each child. The children will need to find the following words:

- astray
- disobedient
- hated
- slaves
- envy
- foolish
- hating
- malice



Notes

Once the children have found the words in the word search, explain to them that these words are used by Paul in today's Bible passage to describe all those who are not Christians. Ask the children what they think of the words. Ask them whether they think these kinds of people deserve

to be saved from God's judgment, anger, and punishment.

Emphasize to the children that no one deserves God's free gift of faith, and no one can earn God's free gift of faith. It is given graciously by the Holy Spirit.

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 to describe one of the best gifts they've ever received. Ask them if the gift changed their lives forever.

Ask the children to think about the occasions when they receive gifts, and ask them if they had to do anything to qualify for the birthday gift or Christmas gift. Gifts are freely given without reason and illustrate the greatest gift a person can ever receive. The gift of faith is the most significant gift ever, and it is life-changing!

Read Titus 3:1–7. Provide Bibles for the children to read along.

Explain to the children that Paul is trying to help Titus understand how to care for and teach the Christians in his congregation. In chapter 3, Paul asks Titus to remind the Christians about what they once were, before they were given faith by the Holy Spirit. He is encouraging Titus to help the Christians live joyful, godly, and obedient lives.

Explain to the children that these verses clearly identify where faith comes from, and they contain a strong reminder that people cannot save themselves. Paul says that salvation comes from God the Savior. God in his great kindness and love reaches out to save those who are undeserving. Invite the children to look at verse 5 and ask them if they can identify what the Holy Spirit does.

The Holy Spirit gives faith through:

- washing
- rebirth
- renewal

Explain to the children that it is God the Holy Spirit who changes people's hearts when they become Christians. In verse 7 Paul explains to Titus that Christians are justified by God's grace; because of Jesus, Christians are declared not guilty by God. At the same time, the Holy Spirit washes away a Christian's sin and makes him or her new. Encourage the children to think back to Question 25: "Does Christ's death mean all our sins can be forgiven?" The iodine/bleach



Notes

illustration demonstrated the washing away of sin. Christians are born again and become members of God's family. Remind the children of the baby wrapping paper and the fact that when the Holy Spirit gives the gift of faith, a new Christian is born into God's family. Acknowledge to the children that this is a difficult thing to understand and that they will gain a deeper understanding as they get older. They just need to remember that the gift of faith comes through the Holy

Spirit to those who are undeserving but greatly loved by God.

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 35 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.)

10 Activity

You will need a papier-mâché box for each child and materials to decorate them with.

Give each child a box. Ask the children to write "FAITH" inside the box on the bottom and "FROM: The Holy Spirit" on the lid

of the box. Allow the children to decorate the boxes. As they are decorating, remind them that faith is a free gift from the Holy Spirit to everyone who trusts in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.



5 Discussion and Question Time

Some questions that might arise include:

? If God has to give faith, does that make me like a robot with no choice about what to believe?

No, people have wills, something robots do not have. It is true that we cannot have faith unless God gives it to us through the Holy Spirit. That gift comes because God reveals to our minds his true glory and goodness, which we had not previously been able to see. This is very different from programming a robot.

? Can I feel the Holy Spirit at work inside me?

Explain to the children that the work of the Holy Spirit is a wonderful thing and not to be feared. Reassure the children that it is not a physical change, but a spiritual change, and so there won't be a tangible physical experience. There will be a spiritual awareness of being made new by the Holy Spirit when someone puts his or her trust in Jesus in repentance and faith.

? Do all Christians have the Holy Spirit living inside them?

Yes! Explain to the children that everyone who becomes a Christian will receive the gift of faith from the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (see John 16:13; Rom. 8:9).

Also use this opportunity to help the children think about their own lives and

how this question and answer affects them personally.

- Ask the children if they acknowledge that they cannot save themselves.
- Ask the children if they can rejoice in the gift of faith personally.
- Ask the children whether they pray for their friends and family to receive faith from the Holy Spirit as they come to understand their need for a Redeemer.

10 Virtue Vision

Perseverance

Discuss with the children whether it's easy or hard to keep going with something. Ask them if they are more likely to give up quickly if they're on their own or if they've got someone helping and supporting them.

Ask the children if they think marathon runners appreciate having lots of support on the streets when they're running. Support and encouragement helps people persevere.

Tell the class that after the Holy Spirit gives us faith, he doesn't leave us. He stays with us, encouraging and equipping us so that we can persevere as we run the race of faith. Ask the children whether knowing that the Holy Spirit is always with them will help them to persevere in the Christian life. Ask them how they can help one another persevere.

10 Memory Activity

You will need to print the memory verse or catechism question and answer and cut it up into words or phrases (depending on the number of children in the class). Stick the words/phrases under the children's chairs before the lesson begins.

Read the memory verse or catechism question and answer to the children and

then explain to them that words or phrases are stuck under their seats! Invite the children to get the word from under their seat and then encourage them to organize themselves so that the memory verse is in the correct order. Read the memory verse for the children as they are trying to figure out the correct order of the words/phrases.





5 **Closing Prayer Time**

Pray that the children would understand and know personally that faith comes from the Holy Spirit rather than themselves, and that this would make them glad.

Notes

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Crossway for publishing this curriculum and would like to extend special thanks to Tara Davis for her keen editorial eye, and to Dave DeWit and Josh Dennis for their oversight.

Redeemer City to City and Redeemer Presbyterian Church gave The Gospel Coalition permission to develop *The New City Catechism*, originally the work of Timothy Keller and Sam Shammas, into *The New City Catechism Curriculum*.

The project was made possible in part through a generous grant to The Gospel Coalition from the John Templeton Foundation. Thanks to Richard Bollinger and Sarah Clement who believed in the character and virtue potential of this project early on. Thanks also to TGC's Ben Peays and Dan Olson, who worked closely with the John Templeton Foundation when this project was just an idea.

We are grateful for the input and ideas of Sarah Schnitker and Kimberly Griswold of Fuller Theological Seminary on virtue development, educator Caitlin Nunery on classroom activities, and psychologist Brent Bounds on psychological development of children.

Betsy Howard of the Gospel Coalition served as managing editor of *The New City Catechism Curriculum*, and Collin Hansen provided theological oversight.

Most importantly, this curriculum would never have come to fruition without its chief writer, Melanie Lacy of Oak Hill Theological College. Melanie's years of experience as a proponent of catechesis and as a practitioner of children's ministry in the church shaped the curriculum and enriched each lesson.

It took many people to produce *The New City Catechism Curriculum*. Together, we hope it will be used to raise up a generation of children who place their only hope, in life and death, in Jesus Christ.