

What is God Up To In Your Life?

Romans 8:28-29

EFCA Statement of Faith (Article 8)

We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

I. What is "God's Justifying Grace"?

Justify – "to make acceptable to God; to give a right standing with God"

Grace – "God's undeserved favor"

II. What is "God's Sanctifying Power and Purpose"?

Sanctification – "the process of transformation in which a believer becomes more and more like Jesus in character, behavior, deeds, priorities, thoughts, and values."

III. Why Must God's Justifying Grace and His Sanctifying Power and Purpose Not Be Separated?

A. Life Transformation is an Essential _____ of Salvation

B. Life Transformation is Crucial to the _____ of Salvation

1. Regeneration – Repentance – Faith
2. Justification – Union with Christ – Adoption
3. Sanctification
4. Glorification

C. Life Transformation is the Only _____ of Genuine Conversion

D. False "Conversions" are a _____

Conclusion / Application

1. Be aware of the risk
2. Be careful not to pervert the gospel
3. Don't give false assurance to others
4. Be strongly committed to God's purpose in your own life

Day by Day in the Word

Monday

Read John 3:16 and Acts 16:31. What is the only response God requires from us in order to receive eternal life and gain salvation? Since Jesus tells us we are to obey His commands, why would it be a perversion of the gospel to tell someone that in order to be saved he must believe in Jesus and obey His commands? Read Ephesians 2:8-10 to see how obedience and “good works” fit into the gospel message. How does this keep us from inappropriately separating God’s “justifying grace” from His “sanctifying power and purpose”? Email your explanation to someone... or to me at helives@efchb.org.

Tuesday

On Sunday we saw four solid reasons why God’s justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. Today we’ll consider the first reason: **life transformation is an essential purpose of salvation**. How is that essential purpose seen in Romans 8:28-29? Notice that God does not just “wish” this would take place in our lives. He predestined that we would “become conformed to the image of His Son.” What are some ways you can see that God has enabled you to become more like Jesus? Make a list, thank God for these changes, and then briefly review them each day this week as an encouragement that God is working in your life.

Wednesday

Reason two: **life transformation is crucial to the nature of salvation**. In the book of Romans Paul lays out for the believers in Rome the gospel message he has been preaching. Though he never uses the word regeneration, he makes it clear that a man is justified by faith alone. Read Romans 3:19-28. Chapters 3-5 focus on justification by faith, ch. 6-8 explain sanctification, and the latter part of chapter 8 introduces glorification. Salvation incorporates all three. Look again at 6:1-7, 12-14, 20-23. What principles do we learn about God freeing us from sin?

Thursday

Reason three: **life transformation is the only visible evidence of genuine conversion**. While working with youth, when teens would accept Christ, we would sometimes encourage them to record the event and the date in the back of their Bibles. That way when Satan came along and caused them to doubt their salvation, they would have this “monument of remembrance” to assure them. How might this be helpful? How might it also provide false assurance? Read John 15:1-10. What does Jesus offer as a basis for assurance of salvation?

Friday

Reason four: **false “conversions” are a very real danger**. Salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone – without works – is fundamental. For this reason many people have been very puzzled by James 2. What James actually warns against is a kind of faith that has no effect on a person’s character and deeds. Genuine faith always changes one’s heart and life (II Cor 5:17). Read James 2:14-26. How might this passage help an individual become aware that his supposed faith in Christ did not bring about a true conversion? What should that person do?