

The Augsburg Confession

• Lesson Two •

Articles 4 and 5: Justification, the Teaching by Which the Church Stands or Falls

1. Article 4, paragraph 1, states that people “cannot be justified (declared not guilty) *before God* by their own power, merits, or deeds.” Read Psalm 130:3; Psalm 143:2; and Isaiah 64:6. How does God see us?
2. Article 4, paragraph 1, also states that people “are freely justified for Christ’s sake.” Read Romans 3:23,24 and Titus 2:11. What word describes why we are freely justified?
3. Read Romans 11:6 and Titus 3:4,5. What is the source of this free justification?
4. “Grace is an infused quality that elevates man’s natural goodness to a much higher level and enables him to please God.” What’s wrong with this statement?
5. Some say that the word *justify* means to “make righteous,” that is, to make one morally right and good. Read Proverbs 17:15; Matthew 12:37; and Romans 3:28. What does the word *justify* mean in these verses?
6. Read John 3:16 and Romans 3:23,24. Who is justified?
7. Read Genesis 15:6 and Romans 4:2,3 and 23-25. How does this blessing of justification personally become our own?
8. What’s wrong with this statement: Faith is believing in the man Jesus (hint: read James 2:19)?

9. Read Romans 7:14-25 and explain the following statement: Faith is the daring reliance, in spite of God's wrath, on Christ our mediator.

10. As Lutheran Christians, we believe that a glorious exchange has taken place. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What is that exchange?

11. The Christian is both a saint and a sinner. How is this true? In what ways is this comforting for us?

12. Read Romans 1:16 and 10:17. What is the means, or the tool, that works faith in the hearts of believers?

13. At the time of the Augsburg Confession, the Anabaptists (those against Baptism as a means of grace) believed that people could receive the Holy Spirit apart from the Word and sacraments "through their own preparations, thoughts, and actions." What group today also believes that the Holy Spirit can come to people apart from the Word and sacraments?

14. If someone claims to speak the words of the Holy Spirit, how can you test to see whether they are or are not speaking the Spirit's words? Read John 6:63 and Acts 17:11.

15. These articles and this lesson may seem like things we already know. For what reasons is it good to read and study it more?