

Each week of 2019 we will take a brief look at one or more questions from the Westminster Shorter Catechism. To read previous weeks' briefs go to [oakhillpca.com/wsc](http://oakhillpca.com/wsc)

Q. 30. *What is effectual calling?*

A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he does persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

Q. 32. *What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?*

A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them.

Jesus Christ is our Redeemer. He has worked "such a great salvation" for us as our prophet, priest, and king. Questions 21-28 unpack Jesus' work. God does not merely accomplish our salvation through the sacrificial work of Christ. He also applies this salvation to us, making us "partakers" of the salvation, by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Effectual calling is the Spirit's gracious work to overcome our bondage to sin. We saw in Q. 18 that sin corrupts our whole nature, tainting our hearts, our minds, and our wills. Because of this sinful corruption, Paul states, "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God" (Rom. 3:10-11). Left to ourselves in the corruption of sin, we would never "embrace Jesus Christ."

The effectual calling of the Spirit takes place in accord with the preaching of the gospel (cf. Rom. 10:14-17). The Spirit does the unseen work of overcoming the corruption of our whole nature.

**1. In our hearts, the Spirit convinces us of our sin and misery.** Our heart is the seat of our treasure (Matt. 6:21). In order to treasure Christ and the salvation he offers, the love of sin must be dethroned from our hearts. The Spirit helps us do this by exposing the ugly truth of sin.

**2. In our minds, the Spirit enlightens us in the knowledge of Christ.** While sin is exposed as miserable, the Spirit gives "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6); he helps our minds to see the beauty and wonder of Jesus Christ.

**3. In our wills, the Spirit renews us.** In the corruption of sin, our wills are in bondage. In order to respond in faith to the gospel call, the Spirit renews our wills so that we can turn from our sin and receive Christ as our Savior.

By the Spirit's work, we are persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ. Without the Spirit, we are lost in sin. The Catechism turns our attention in the following questions to the benefits of this effectual call.