

For Such a Time as This A Daily Devotional Tuesday, October 4, 2022



From A Brief Statement of Faith:

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.
The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith,
sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God
and neighbor,
and binds us together with all believers
in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

I greatly appreciate the Statement's sensitivity to both God's sovereign will and our human, free response. Though God is ultimately sovereign, God does not overpower us and make us only automatons of his will; we have the freedom to live our lives as we see fit.

The Statement hints at this, attributing it to the work of the Spirit:

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor.

David Willis-Watkins, in his discussion of this section of the confession, wrote:

The new relationship of living as forgiven sinners enabled by the Holy Spirit to grown in life together in Christ – that is precisely what it means to be 'justified' (made righteous) and set in the way of sanctification (the growth in that new life). ... Our response is by the power of the Spirit – and it is therefore really our response, and not just God's response to God. Where the Spirit is, there is freedom, according to Second Corinthians – freedom for humans to be transformed into the likeness of Christ's image.

A little later, in the same article about this passage, Willis-Watkins alludes to one of my favorites:

... as Karl Barth put it, the Holy Spirit is experienced as one 'who sets us on our feet as partners. The Holy Spirit wants us to stand up and walk on our own legs as the Spirit's partners. In other words, the Spirit wants us to believe, to love, to hope.'

It is by the operation of God's Spirit in our lives that we are enabled to respond to the grace that God grants us all. It is the Spirit that opens our eyes to see this grace all around us while the rest of the world may well just go blithely by all unseeing. Therefore, we ought always to be thankful that God's Spirit really is at work in us all.

Prayer for the Day: (From *Fifty Prayers* by Karl Barth)

Lord, our God, we ask that you would remain with your church, both here and everywhere. Amen.

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