

JUSTIFIED AND CALLED.

QUESTION.—Can any one be justified and yet not be called? or are all the justified ones called?

Answer.—It is possible for one to be justified and yet not be called. All justified persons are not called.

Abraham and others of the past were 'justified by faith', but living before the ransom was given, before the Captain had been perfected, before the Gospel age 'call' began, before the new and living way (or new way of life) had been opened up, those grand ancient worthies were not called to be members of the Bride class.

'Justification by faith' throughout this Gospel age is merely the first step in the ways of the Lord, now opened to whosoever hath an ear to hear. The second step is *consecration*, a full surrender of our all to the Lord. We may safely conclude that all who took the first step were welcome to take the second one, and that it would appear the '*reasonable service*' to all sincere ones who properly appreciated God's mercy in forgiving their sins. Those not thus influenced usually found their faith grow as cold and lifeless as their love, and thus losing their faith were without justification again—part of the unjustified world.

Whoever of the justified were of the right spirit and made consecration of their all during the period of the call, were of the 'called ones' mentioned by the Apostle and urged to make their calling and election sure by obedience to their covenant. This same class now, since the end of the 'call', are not thus called, but are in a *waiting* attitude. Knowing from the Scriptures that 'many are called but few chosen', they are *waiting* for an opportunity to take places amongst the 'called' as *substitutes* for some not found worthy.

It would not be unreasonable to suppose that there are hundreds in just such a waiting condition, although the present-day preaching is not very favourable to either justification or consecration:

justification through faith in the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, the only kind, is little understood or taught.

On the other hand there are doubtless thousands in all the denominations of Christendom who have taken both steps (justification and consecration) who are overcharged with cares of this life and whose periods of opportunity gradually expiring leave places for those who seek and pray and hunger to enter into the favour of the 'called' class. We have no positive means of knowing who are thus accepted as substitutes, but we think it reasonable to consider three conditions as indicative of such acceptance. (1) A growth in the fruits of the spirit. (2) Activity in serving the Truth to the extent of talents and opportunities. (3) An ability to grasp prominent features of the Truth with considerable clearness.

The question then arises, What about justified believers who have consecrated and who may never find a chance as substitutes? We incline to consider these to be few,—that the Lord will give the hearing ear to comparatively few except as there may be an opening for them. However, if any of said class do fail of an opportunity to become substitutes we would be sure that divine love and care would be over them just as surely, and that failing a place in the elect Church through no fault of theirs, these would be given some good portion which would much more than reward and satisfy them.

—ZION'S WATCH TOWER, August 15, 1904.—