

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Justification: Faith

In last week's article, we noticed 6 components necessary for justification. To refresh our memory, let's look at them again:

1. By faith: "*Therefore, being justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Romans 5:1)
2. By grace: "*Being justified freely by his **grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 3:24)
3. By Jesus' blood: "*Much more then, being now justified by **his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him*" (Romans 5:9)
4. By the faith of Jesus Christ: "*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the **faith of Jesus Christ***" (Galatians 2:16a)
5. By Christ: "*Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified*" (Romans 8:30a)
6. By works: "*Ye see then how that by **works** a man is justified, and not by faith only*" (James 2:24).

Question: can a person omit any one of the 6, yet be justified? Students of the Bible well know that, when God commands, there can be no omissions or changes made by man.

In the denominational world, "works" is often a misunderstood part of our justification. Some groups teach "faith only," saying no works are to be required for justification. The works of righteousness that God commands are essential; the works man devises cannot justify. The works of righteousness that God commands are found in His Word; the works man devises are found in his denominational creed books and in the pronouncements of conventions, conferences, and the like. Here are a few of man's works devised over the years: Christmas, Easter, Lent, instrumental music, observing the Lord's Supper less often than weekly, addressing a man as "Reverend"; the list could be much longer. Let's focus on one of man's pronouncements that appeared in last week's news. A denomination has "ordained" a homosexual man as a bishop. We learn from this event that the denomination considers homosexuality compatible with the Christian life, and that the denomination sets up a "bishop" (singular) over a designated area. Consistently, throughout His Word, God calls homosexuality sin, and gives no hope of justification to those who practice it. (It is well to mention here that God also calls fornication sin, whether homosexual or heterosexual, and no fornicator can continue to fornicate and be justified.) As to the position of "bishop," in the setting up of Christ's church, each congregation had a plurality of bishops. Their arena of work was only in the congregation which had appointed them. God lays down clear qualifications for a bishop. One of these is to be the husband of one wife. Does

the denominational homosexual man meet this law of God? It is clear he does not.

It is both a joy and a challenge to know most of you readers search the scriptures, checking the content of these articles against what God says in His Word. May you continue to do so. The example cited above sets out clearly how man attempts to over-rule God. May you continue to think about what various denominations are teaching, compare the teachings with God's Word, and reject both the teaching and the group that differs from God's Word!