

Message Notes

Sola Fide: Faith Alone

Introduction - "Celebrating 500 years"

After the 95 Theses

The Five Solas

sola fide (by faith alone)
sola Scriptura (by Scripture alone)
solus Christus (by Christ alone)
sola gratia (by grace alone)
solī Deo gloria (glory to God alone).

Today's Message:

Sola Fide: Faith Alone
Philippians 3:1-16

The Early Church on Faith Alone

What is meant by Faith Alone?

What sola fide affirms and denys

Alister McGrath

Forensic
Distinguishing between Justification and
Sanctification
Alien Righteousness (Imputation)

Timothy George

Imputation
Faith Alone Justifies
Simul Iustus et Peccator
(Simultaneously Saint and Sinner)

Is Faith Alone Biblical?

John 3:1-21

John 20:30-31

Philippians 3

Hey, what about James 2:24?!?!?

A look in context (James 2:14-24)

What about Good Works?

Gospel Application - *Are you now trusting in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of your sins and for the fulfillment of all his promises to you, even eternal life?*

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

John 3:16-21

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

John 20:30-31

³⁰Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Philippians 3:7-11

⁷But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰I want to know Christ—to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

James 2:14-24

¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

²⁰You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.



1517



2017

AMAZING GRACE

The Reformation to the Glory of God

Philippians 3:1-16

¹Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. ²Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. ³For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh — ⁴though I myself have reasons for such confidence.

Philippians 3:1-16

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

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Philippians 3:1-16

¹²Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:1-16

¹⁵All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

After the 95 Thesis:

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1519

Leipzig Debate

Luther debates Johann Eck (1486-1543) on *sola scriptura* (scripture alone) being the basis for the Christian faith.



After the 95 Thesis:

1520

Luther Publishes

Luther publishes three monumental works, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *On the Freedom of a Christian*.

In *The Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, Luther outlined the doctrine of the **Priesthood of all believers** and denied the authority of the Pope to interpret, or confirm interpretation of the Bible.

After the 95 Thesis:

1521 (January - May)

Diet of Worms

Luther appears at the *Diet* before Charles V, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, to answer charges of heresy. On refusing to recant, he is declared a heretic and formally excommunicated from the Catholic Church by Pope Leo X.

Frederick III, Elector of Saxony ensures that Luther is taken to the Wartburg Castle for his own safety



Anton von Werner (1843–1915), *Luther at the Diet of Worms*, 1877, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen.

~ Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms

**After the 95 Thesis:
1521 (October)
Defender of the Faith**

After writing *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* (Defence of the Seven Sacraments) in opposition to Luther, Henry VIII of England is rewarded with the title *Fidei Defensor* (Defender of the Faith) by Pope Leo X.



**After the 95 Thesis:
1522
German Bible**

While at the Wartburg castle, Luther works on a translation of the Bible into German and publishes his New Testament translation (The Old Testament translation is posted later, in 1534).



**After the 95 Thesis:
1526
English Bible**

William Tyndale (c. 1494-1536) publishes a translation of the New Testament in English.



**After the 95 Thesis:
1530
Augsburg Confession**

Publication of the *Confessio Augustana* or Augsburg Confession,
outlining Lutheran theology and practice.



**After the 95 Thesis:
1531
Death of Ulrich Zwingli**



Following conflict between the Catholic and Protestant cantons of the Swiss confederacy, Zwingli is killed during the Battle of Kappel.

**After the 95 Thesis:
1533
English Reformation**

The marriage of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon is declared null and void by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury in defiance of the Catholic church. Henry later marries Anne Boleyn.



**After the 95 Thesis:
1536
Calvin's *Institutes***

John Calvin (1509-1564) publishes (in Latin) his work of Systematic Theology: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.



**After the 95 Thesis:
1545-63
Council of Trent**

The 19th Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church is held to reform and clarify doctrine. It repudiated Protestantism and led to the issuing of a Catechism in 1566.



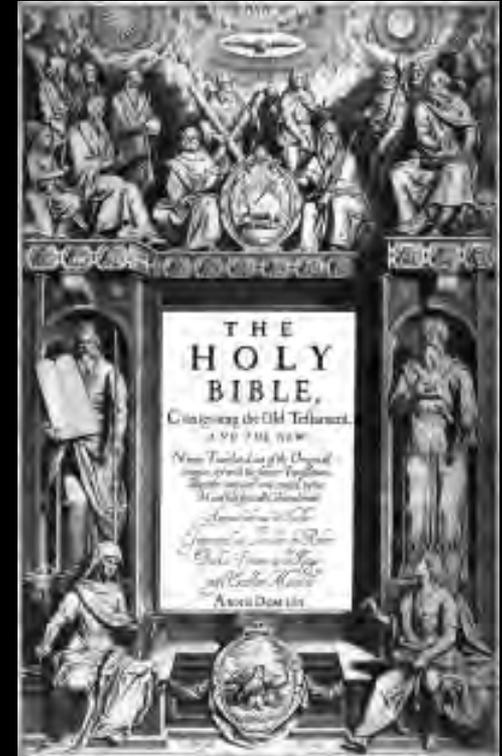
**After the 95 Thesis:
1563
39 Articles**



The 39 Articles of the Church of England are first published, giving a summary of Anglican doctrine and practice. They were preceded by the *42 Articles* of 1552, written largely by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556).

**After the 95 Thesis:
1611
King James Bible**

Publication of the KJV or
Authorized Version,
a translation for the
Church of England.



~ Timeline adopted from "Timeline of Reformation History (1517-1685)"
<http://protestantism.co.uk/timeline.html>



FIVE

SOLAS

AMAZING GRACE

The Reformation to the Glory of God

SOL**A**

saved by

GRATIA

Grace alone

SOL**A**

through

FIDE

Faith alone

SOL**U**S

in

CHRISTUS

Christ alone

SOL**A**

according to

SCRIPTURA

Scripture alone

SOL**I**

for the

DEO GLORIA

glory of God alone

Today's Message:
Sola Fide: *Faith Alone*

Today's Message:
Sola Fide: *Faith Alone*

aka ~ Justification by Faith Alone

One of the five rallying cries of the Reformation was the statement that we are saved by faith alone — *sola fide!* These words declared that salvation does not come from looking at our own works of righteousness, but from looking outside ourselves to another, to the person and work of Jesus Christ. This statement grew out of a desire to return to the biblical text and to the teachings of the early church fathers, a cry to reform the



and return it to biblical orthodoxy. Centuries have passed since the Reformation, and we may wonder: Does *sola fide* still matter today? Is the notion of justification by faith alone just a relic of days gone by, reflecting a nostalgia for a previous time?

...I believe that the Reformation cry of sola fide should continue to be taught and treasured today because it summarizes biblical teaching, and God's Word never loses its transforming power. The Word of God speaks in every era and in every place. While some may hold on to sola fide to uphold tradition, I believe we should hold on to the tradition of sola fide because it accords with the Word of God. Justification by faith alone isn't the product of rigid and brittle orthodoxy. It speaks to the minds and hearts of people all throughout history because it tackles one of the fundamental questions of our human condition: How can a person be right with God?



~ Thomas R Schreiner, *Faith Alone---The Doctrine of Justification: What the Reformers Taught... and Why It Still Matters*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan), p. 15.

The Early Church Fathers on:
Sola Fide

All, therefore, were glorified and magnified, not through themselves or their own works or the righteous actions which they did, but through his will. And so we, having been called through his will in Christ Jesus, are not justified through ourselves or through our wisdom or understanding or piety or works, which we have done in holiness of heart, but through faith, by which the almighty God has justified all who have existed from the beginning, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

~ Clement, early church father, c. AD 96 in 1 Clement 32: 3 - 4,12



[Hilary of Poitiers (fourth century)], states in his commentary on Matthew that “salvation is entirely by faith,” and emphasizes this theme repeatedly. Hence, Abraham, the thief on the cross, and the eleventh hour workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20: 1 – 16) are all justified by faith. Indeed, Hilary specifically declares that justification is by faith alone:

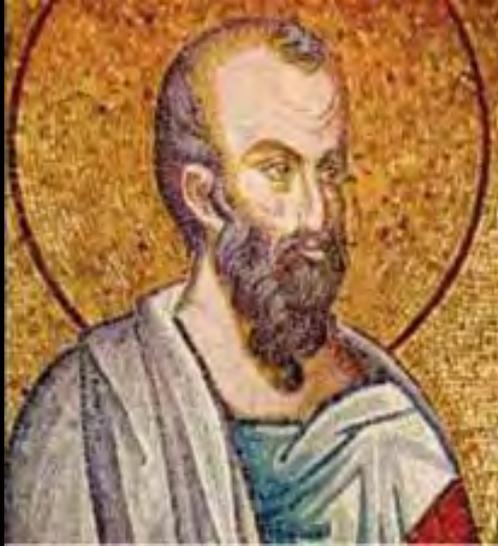


“Because faith alone justifies . . . publicans and prostitutes will be the first in the kingdom of heaven.”

~ Quoted from D. H. Williams, “Justification by Faith: A Patristic Doctrine,” p. 660.

The fourth-century father Theodoret of Cyrrhus comments on Ephesians 2: 8 ~

[For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.]



“It is not of our own accord that we have believed . . . and even when we had come to believe, He did not require of us purity of life, but approving mere faith, God bestowed on us forgiveness of sins.”

~ quoted from Thomas C. Oden, *The Justification Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 45.

What *Sola Fide* is saying
and not saying

Alister McGrath on Luther's (and Protestantism's) views of Justification by Faith:

First, justification is forensic rather than transformative, denoting a change in status rather than a change in nature.

Second, justification is clearly distinguished from sanctification. Justification refers to the declaration that one stands in the right before God, while sanctification denotes the ongoing renewal and transformation in one's life.

Third, justification indicates alien righteousness, which means that Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer. Believers aren't righteous because of a righteousness inherent to them.

~ paraphrased from Alister E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, vol. 2, *From the 1500s to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 2.



Timothy George has identified three elements in Luther's theology, all closely connected:

(1) imputation;

(2) faith-alone justifies;

(3) believers are justified
and at the same time sinners.



~ summary from Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (rev. ed.; Nashville: B & H Academic, 2013), p. 70.

Martin Luther on:
Imputution

Therefore this presumption of righteousness is a huge and horrible monster. To break and crush it, God needs a large and powerful hammer, that is, the Law, which is the hammer of death, the thunder of hell, and the lightning of divine wrath. To what purpose? To attack the presumption of righteousness, which is a rebellious, stubborn, and stiffnecked beast.



...hunger is the best cook. As the dry earth thirsts for rain, so the Law makes the troubled heart thirst for Christ. To such hearts Christ tastes sweetest, to them He is joy, comfort, and life. Only then are Christ and His work understood correctly.

~ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians 1535: Chapters 1 – 4* (vol. 26 of Luther's Works; ed. Jaroslav Pelikan; St. Louis: Concordia, 1964), p. 310.

“But this righteousness is heavenly and passive. We do not have it of ourselves; we receive it from heaven.”



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“Through faith in Christ, therefore, Christ’s righteousness becomes our righteousness and all that he has becomes ours.”



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“He who trusts in Christ exists in Christ; he is one with Christ, having the same righteousness as he.”

“But this righteousness is heavenly and passive. We do not have it of ourselves; we receive it from heaven.”

“Through faith in Christ, therefore, Christ’s righteousness becomes our righteousness and all that he has becomes ours.”



“He who trusts in Christ exists in Christ; he is one with Christ, having the same righteousness as he.”

“Therefore this is a marvelous definition of Christian righteousness: it is a divine imputation for reckoning as righteousness or to righteousness, for the sake of our faith in Christ or for the sake of Christ.”

~ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians 1535: Chapters 1 – 4* (vol. 26 of Luther’s Works; ed. Jaroslav Pelikan; St. Louis: Concordia, 1964), p. 8 and Martin Luther, “Two Kinds of Righteousness,” in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings* (edited with an introduction by John Dillenberger; Garden City: Doubleday, 1961), p. 86, 87.

Martin Luther on:
Faith Alone Justifies

[A person] “is justified by faith alone and not any works.”
“We are pronounced righteous solely by faith in Christ, not by the works of the Law or by love.”

“Wherefore it ought to be the first concern of every Christian to lay aside all confidence in works and grow in the knowledge, not of works, but of Christ Jesus, who suffered and rose for him.”



~ Martin Luther, “*The Freedom of a Christian*,” in *Three Treatises* (trans. W. A. Lambert; rev. Harold J. Grimm; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 280-81 and Luther, *Galatians 1 –*

4,

p. 57.

Faith is not the OBJECT (ground) but the MEANS:

[God] “sent His Son into the world, heaped all the sins of all men upon Him, and said to Him:



‘Be Peter the denier; Paul the persecutor, blasphemer and assaulter; David the adulterer; the sinner who ate the apple in Paradise; the thief on the cross. In short, be the person of all men, the one who has committed the sins of all men.’”

~ Martin Luther, *Galatians 1 - 4*, 137. P. 280

Faith is not the OBJECT (ground) but the MEANS:

Faith alone justifies “because faith brings us the Spirit gained by the merits of Christ.” Faith saves because it

“takes hold of Christ and believes that my sin and death are damned and abolished in the sin and death of Christ.” Faith saves, then, because it unites believers to Christ.



~ Quotes from Martin Luther found in Thomas R Schreiner, *Faith Alone---The Doctrine of Justification: What the Reformers Taught...and Why It Still Matters* p. 45.

Martin Luther on:
Saint AND Sinner

“ ” *Simul Justus et Peccator* (Simultaneously Saint and Sinner)

“We are in truth and totally sinners, with regard to ourselves and our first birth. Contrariwise, in so far as Christ has been given for



us, we are holy and just totally. Hence from different aspects we are said to be just and sinners at one and the same time.”

~ Martin Luther, as quoted in Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (rev. ed.; Nashville: B & H Academic, 2013), p. 72.

Is Sola Fide Biblical?

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‘We hate math,’ say 4 in 10
— a majority of Americans

WASHINGTON — People in this country have a love-hate relationship with math, a favorite school subject for some but just a bad memory for many others, especially women.

In an AP-AOL News poll as students head back to school, almost four in 10 adults surveyed said they hated math in school, a widespread disdain that complicates efforts today

Is Sola Fide Biblical?



John 3:1-21

¹Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ²He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

³Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

John 3:1-21

⁴“How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

John 3:1-21

⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’

⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

John 3:1-21

⁹“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹²I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man. ¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”





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by what they do
and not by faith alone.

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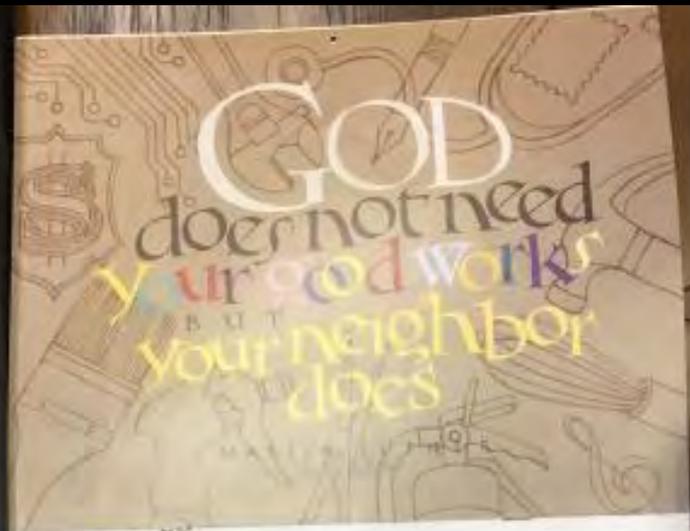
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It is faith alone that justifies,
but faith that justifies can never
be alone.

~ John Calvin



JUNE 2017

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1517



2017

AMAZING GRACE

The Reformation to the Glory of God

Gospel Application:

*Are you now trusting in Jesus Christ alone
for the forgiveness of your sins
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Does your life reflect the faith you have in Jesus?