

**“THE 5 SOLAS OF THE REFORMATION
SOLA FIDE: FAITH ALONE”**

**Galatians 2:16, Romans 1:17, Hebrews 1:1-3, John
1:11-12, Romans 3:21-24**

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a second and welcome our first-time guests...we are so happy to have you here with today.

We are in week four of our series “Sola” and what we’ve been doing is looking at the five core beliefs that came out of the Reformation...

Sola Scriptura (Scripture Alone)

Solus Christus (Christ Alone)

Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)

Sola Fide (Faith Alone)

Soli Deo Gloria (To the Glory of God Alone)

Now here’s the thing...

The Reformers didn’t come up with these central biblical truths...they rediscovered them.

These were truths that were embraced by the early church, but over time church leaders began to teach that salvation was something that could be bought or earned.

By the time you get to the 1500's the Reformers were like we're done with this works based religion...

We're going back to the Scripture...

This is why we started our series looking at Sola Scriptura...The big idea in week one was that Scripture Alone...Not the church, not a priest or a pastor, not the culture...

But the Bible has the final say about Who God is, how we are saved, and how we should live out our lives as His children...

Then we looked at Solus Christus...Christ Alone... The idea was that salvation has been made available to all who will believe because of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. We said salvation is

exclusive...Jesus is the only way...Not Jesus + good works or Jesus + water baptism or Jesus + speaking in tongues...

Salvation is found in no one else...for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved...

Last week we looked at the third Sola, Sola Gratia...Salvation is by Grace Alone.

Grace is getting something that you don't deserve...Grace is the unmerited favor of God.

This is where the cross comes in!
God poured all of the punishment that you and I deserved on His Son. He punishes sin at the cross so that He can extend to us His mercy and grace!

At the cross Justice was served...Jesus took our punishment...At the cross mercy was extended...we don't get what we deserve...

At the cross grace was poured out...We are saved...we are reconciled...we get to live the abundant life here...and we get to be with God forever...

Salvation is an act of God's **GRACE ALONE**

Today we arrive at the fourth message of our series on the great doctrines of the Reformation: "*Sola Fide*," "faith alone."

Pray

The Reformers discovered that it was "by faith" that a person was justified or "declared righteous" before God.

As far back as [Genesis 15:6](#), we read that Abraham "*believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*" It wasn't that the patriarch was "made righteous" by any works that he had done.

Rather, it was because he believed the promise of God that "righteousness" or "justification" was credited to

his account. In other words, he was “declared righteous” by “*the Judge of all the earth*” ([Genesis 18:25](#)).

You see, “justification” is the legal verdict handed down by the Lord to those whose faith is toward Him. Because He is a holy and just God, He demands perfect righteousness on the part of all His creation.

That is, of course, a standard which none of us will ever be able to attain.

Jesus was the only One who ever walked this earth who was able.

Long after Abraham, the prophet Habakkuk (2:4) confirmed that “*The righteous shall live by his faith.*”

The New Testament writers repeatedly refer to that same truth in [Romans 1:17](#), [Galatians 3:11](#), and [Hebrews 10:38](#))...we will get to those in a bit.

But let’s be clear. Faith is not some notion that if we just “believe strongly enough” in some undefined

concept, that will be sufficient to get us through this life and into the next.

No, Martin Luther was right when he said, “Faith is no faith without an object, and the only saving faith is in the saving One.”

This passage perhaps drove Luther away from the darkness of Roman Catholicism to a clear understanding of saving faith which was found in Paul’s epistle to the Galatians. There, in chapter 2 verse 16, Luther and countless others after him discovered these liberating and life-giving words (Don’t you love when the word brings more liberation to you):

“We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.”

“Faith alone in Christ alone!” How important it is for us to understand that it is not in the level of our faith, but in the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus, that we are able to have right standing with God.

As we explore “*Sola Fide*” this morning, we need to see that biblical faith—the faith that justifies, the faith that saves—involves three essential components...knowledge, belief, and trust.

Approaching these three components individually, we see first that...

Faith must begin with knowing ([Romans 1:17](#), [Hebrews 1:1-3](#)).

Because the “faith alone” that saves is faith in Christ, faith must begin with knowing about the One.

Church, listen to me carefully because I believe today some of you will be set free from your wrong belief.

Faith is the instrument that receives all of God's promises.

The promises that are received are very different things and so Christians sometimes are confused over it.

Paul says that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith in other words we are to BEGIN by FAITH, CONTINUE by FAITH and FINISH by FAITH.

When we were first converted to God it was the moment when we were first given the gift of faith.

We really need to speak of our faith in God as a gift to us from God because this is how scripture speaks of it,

Philippians 1:29

29 For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. 29 There's far more to this life than trusting in Christ. There's also suffering for him.

We will come back to this scripture because I want to remind you of something.

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

Think back when your heart was moved to accept Jesus as your Lord and savior...three things happened in that moment that we need to understand so that we can grasp that Faith Alone is in Christ Alone.

1. **You were given a new Heart**: this is something that only God can do know that we have nothing to do with it. God takes away our heart of stone and gives us a heart of flesh. Ezekiel 36:26. It's not

something you have done, it's simply another gift from God.

2. **You turned from your sin (Repentance) and believed that Jesus is Lord (Belief).** The only way you would be able to do this was because you have a new heart. If you were able to repent and believe with your old heart you would never have needed the new one but that is not possible. Only a new heart can repent and only a new heart can believe. Side note even though you have a new heart it's not a perfect heart, but in order to be accepted by a holy and perfect God it does require perfection. And This is where the 3rd great thing comes in.

3. **(JUSTIFICATION) You were justified:** When you first believed in Christ at that point the bible teaches us that God imputed all the perfections of Jesus on to you...it is the perfect Gift through the

perfect work of Christ that you are Justified. It is His sinless life and Holy sacrifice that is imputed to us. This means that when God considers our status before Him it is the status of Christ, whatever can be said of Christ can be said of us...We are made perfect because He is perfect. Everything evil that could be said about us was said on the cross.

Romans 5:1-3 (NIV)

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

This perfect gift that we are given is a New Legal status. The moment of Justification is like the foreman of the Jury that comes back with an official verdict, the verdict is handed to the Judge and reads as follows, NOT GUILTY!!!

ISN'T THAT AMAZING!!!

Your legal status is no longer indicted but now acquitted!!!

I know for some of you it's so hard to understand that a JUST God would find you not guilty, some of you may feel like how can God forgive me when I've done some really terrible things.

You see your legal status was imputed to a Legal Representative, this legal representative takes full responsibility for all your bad behavior across the board. This is called a COVENANT HEAD.

Romans 5:18-19

Therefore, as through [d]one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one[e] Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Adam was our covenant head and his actions were imputed to us, meaning that he was our legal representative. What he did in the garden of Eden we did in the garden and he represented us well. This is to say that we would not have done any better than him.

But now Jesus is our Covenant Head, just as Adam's disobedience at a tree was imputed to us so also the Lord's obedience on a tree was imputed to those of us who believe.

2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

See Church God Imputes the Righteousness of Jesus Christ to us...this is Justification.

Living Faith is a gift from God...When we look in Faith at Christ on the cross we are receiving the gift of our sins being forgiven.

Christ Died as our Representative Substitute, with our sins imputed to Him we receive the benefit of this penal substitution which removes all of our sins. Whether past, Present or Future.

On the day we became a Christian we are not only justified we're also being sanctified.

Which means our new Legal status, our Justification is what we receive by looking in faith to the resurrection of Christ.

Romans 4:25

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

The difference between Justification and Sanctification is:

Justification is something done for us vs Sanctification it's something that is done in us, which is another gift of God so that we can grow in godliness and receive the gift of Glorification. And it is all through **Faith Alone** that we receive all these gifts from Him.

So let me amplify the fact that it isn't actually faith that saves a person. ***It is faith in Christ alone that saves.***

It is not the amount of faith that a person possesses, but rather the Object of one's faith that saves and sustains.

To have the kind of faith that justifies a sinner, you must first understand who Jesus is and what He is all about which leads me to my second point.

**It is not enough to know about Jesus,
but...Knowing must lead to believing**

Because “faith alone” that saves, is faith in Christ, faith must begin with knowing and believing about the One who saved us.

John 1:11-12

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

The faith that justifies must begin with the knowledge of that solid foundation upon which it is build upon.

The next essential component of faith is to believe what we know. The word “believe” is actually the verbal form of the noun, “faith”.

It is possible for someone to know the content of Scripture well and still be lost, if that content has not reached the level of “belief.”

When John introduced Jesus in his Gospel account, he wrote that *“He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to those who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”* ([John 1:11-12](#)).

When the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas how he might find salvation, the response was *“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved”* Acts 16:31. Belief must proceed from our knowledge.

To be a Christian, I must know that Jesus died on the cross, and then believe that His act was sufficient to pay the penalty for *my* sins and bridge the chasm that separates *me* from the Father.

Faith is that attitude of the heart that moves from no longer believing in ourselves to believing in Another.

We are sinners and must believe that salvation comes to us “by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone.”

Some of you may have a practical question, How do I believe?

[Romans 10:17](#) says, *“Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”*

The word comes to you and you respond yes or No but there is a mental trick that some people try to pull on themselves...trying see how much faith is in their faith instead of having faith in God.

If you look at your own faith deciding whether to have faith. The whole thing will collapse.

You must not have faith in your faith, you must have faith in Christ...looking to Him.

We shouldn't care about the size or strength of our faith but rather in the size or strength of our Christ.

Plane Story:

Things are accomplished by the faithfulness of the object that we place our faith in. And not by the nature of our Faith.

We can have great faith or anemic faith...this why Jesus says, ***if we have faith the size of a mustard seed it could accomplish great things.***

Matthew 17:20

Faith is the natural response to the perceived faithfulness of God.

If you're going to put your faith under a microscope and try to watch it grow you will be disappointed. It's like planting a garden and thinking that if you stare at it long enough you will see it grow...not going to happen.

Your faith can not inspire more faith.

The Thing That Must Be Strong Is The Thing We Are Placing Our Faith In.

A Weak Faith Placed In A Strong Object Will Accomplish More Than A Strong Faith In A Weak Object.

IF YOU WOULD JUST LEARN TO TAKE THE FOCUS OFF YOURSELF, IF YOU WOULD JUST LEARN TO LOOK TO CHRIST, IF YOU JUST LEARN TO LISTEN TO THE GOSPEL AND IF YOU WOULD JUST TURN TO SCRIPTURE YOU WILL FIND THAT YOUR FAITH HAS BEEN QUIETLY GROWING.

That third component is that...

**Believing must result in trusting
Romans 3:21-24.**

Faith is effective only when we put our trust in “Christ alone”.

Trusting extends beyond “belief” or understanding because it “relies” and “rests comfortably” in the One who has given the promise.

It is personal trust and confidence in Christ and “Christ alone.” It is a heartfelt commitment, casting oneself upon Jesus for pardon and mercy.

When Jesus called disciples to Himself, He said, *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me”* (Luke 9:23).

His commitment to Christ is without qualification. It is total and absolute dependance on christ. The “*cross*” that he takes up is a symbol of dying to himself.

Despite popular teaching to the contrary, Jesus cannot be Savior if He is not Lord.

It is here where the relationship between faith and works must entered.

Most of us are probably familiar with the classic statement found in James (2:17) that “faith without works is dead.”

Luther himself stumbled over this because it seemed to conflict with Paul’s insistence that a person is saved “*by grace...through faith...(and) not as a result of works*” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

There is no contradiction because Paul was speaking of the kind of faith that saves, whereas James was describing what saving faith looks like.

Or to say it another way, “***it is faith alone that justifies, but the faith that justifies is never alone.***”

Paul most certainly agreed with James in that regard, for right after saying that justification

comes *“by grace...through faith,”* he added, *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works”* (Ephesians 2:10).

So, let's be clear. “Works” do not contribute in any way to the ground of our justification.

As someone put it, they are the “fruit” and not the “root” of salvation. *“Works,”* therefore, are the evidence of saving faith.

A faith from which no works flow is exposed as a counterfeit.

Those who are saved will inevitably *“bear fruit in keeping with repentance”* (Matthew 3:8).

The first verse of Hebrews 11 serves to remind us that *“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”*

As with the testimonies of the men and women that are recorded in that chapter, we see that faith does not come without a cost.

J.I. Packer wrote this “The life of faith is lived not on beds of ease, but on battlefields.” It is surely not for the faint of heart.

How would you know how much faith you have without conflict?

Think about it, no story is good without a good conflict. The conflict in a story is what makes the movies, books, and fairy tales.

If you don't have any conflict the story is boring.

How many of you are Marvel fans, listen don't tell my husband or my kids but those movies are ok...but how many of you remember Infinity War...people came out of the theaters crying.

Talk about a major conflict.

People were so upset about the characters that were killed off and then the sequel to that movie was Endgame where they kill off Ironman. Major

conflicts but guess what if there were no conflicts nobody would ever go see those movies.

Same for us, we want our faith to grow without conflict and I am here to tell you brothers and sisters it is impossible to grow your faith without conflict.

I am standing here today because of major conflicts in my life that lead me to activate my Faith.

My faith was what carried me through the hardest moments of my life which in turn helped my faith to grow.

I can't help but think about Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac but then God providing the ram in the thicket.

That is a major conflict in his spiritual journey...where he demonstrated a tremendous amount of FAITH.

I think about Jacob wrestling with God through the night, it was in that conflict where his name and character were changed.

Think about Moses and the burning bush. He was not the same person after that encounter with God.

Maybe you are here and some of your dreams haven't become reality or you're just full of doubt or you just aren't sure exactly how your story is going to play out.

What I do know is this – the conflicts in your life are going to activate your faith. The conflicts in you can build you up and change the trajectory of your life...it can build your character and even change your name.

But here's the problem, most of us want the guaranteed outcome. We want those situations where we don't even need faith, we want things to go smoothly but the Bible says without faith it is impossible to please God.

What I'm saying is sometimes we need to find ourselves in those situations so we can exercise our faith.

So that we can see that the only thing that can carry us is Faith, Faith in the one Who created us, Faith in the one that has our best interest at heart, Faith in the one Who can do above and beyond what we could imagine.

Church, think about it, most of you are here today because of situations, circumstances, and conflict, that have push you to exercise faith even if you didn't recognize it then.

And I am here to tell you it was faith that brought you here and it is faith that kept you here.

Not only was "*Sola Fide*" central to the Reformation and its widespread influence, but those two words still address the fundamental question that each of us must answer today. After all, life is short and eternity is long.

One day we will stand before God. It is an encounter that we cannot escape and an appointment we each must keep. We should, therefore, constantly be living in the reality of that coming day. It is "by faith and FAITH ALONE" that we are saved, and it is "by faith alone" that we must live each and every day.

So today my question is, who and what are you putting your trust in? Or are you trying to have faith in your faith?

No, your faith should be found in faith Alone in Christ Alone!

So where do you find yourself?