

“SOLA FIDE—BY FAITH ALONE”

Romans 4:1-8

INTRODUCTION TO THE ‘FIVE SOLAS OF THE REFORMATION’

1. The 5 *solas* of the Reformation are historical.
2. The 5 *solas* of the Reformation are Biblical.
3. The 5 *solas* of the Reformation are essential. I.e., “Pillars of the Faith”
 - *sola fide, solus Christus, sola Scriptura, sola gratia, soli Deo gloria* = To God alone be the glory!

SOLA FIDE—JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD THROUGH FAITH ALONE

1. Justification defined: Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for [because of] the righteousness of Christ imputed [counted] to us, and received by faith alone. (*Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question & Answer #33)

- 2. Justification explained:** It is a judicial act of God, by grace, whereby He...
- a) satisfies the sinner’s penalty of sin through the death of Christ, and
 - b) accepts the sinner as just through the righteousness of Christ resulting in...
 - a) the removal of the sinner’s estranged relationship with God, and
 - b) the establishment of a permanently right relationship with Him.

3. Justification through faith alone. Romans 3:21-22

- The righteousness we need comes apart from our works of the Law. **v.21**
-Paul is saying there is a righteousness that comes to us which is not from us, but from God.
- The righteousness we need is now clearly manifested. **v.21**
-This righteousness is complete—I do not add to it. (It doesn’t need any of my “help”.) Gal 5:2-3
-This righteousness is historical & objective—I do not merely subjectively feel it. Acts 26:25-26
- The righteousness we need is Biblical. **v.21** The Law and the Prophets (the OT) teach this truth.
- The righteousness we need comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. **v.22**

4. Justification through faith alone illustrated from the Old Testament. Romans 4:1-12

- The example of Abraham. Abe was justified by faith alone. **v.1-3**
-Quoted Genesis 15:6: Abraham **believed** God, and it was **counted to him as righteousness.**
-“count” Gk. λογίζομαι - give credit; ‘reckoned’
- An example from your paycheck. **v.4-5**
- The example of David. **v.6-8** Quoted Psalm 32:1-2

→ Paul’s point: Abe was counted righteous in Genesis 15—he was not circumcised until Genesis 17. **v.9-10**

→ Paul’s next point: This righteousness can be ours as well. **v.11-12**

CLARIFYING SUMMARIES

1. We do not—and cannot—contribute anything to our justification before God.

2. We do not contribute faith to our justification.

- Faith is not the substitution of one kind of merit (faith) for another kind of merit (works).

3. Biblical Christianity vs. Apostasy.

- Liberalism. **Works = Justification** (Faith is unnecessary.)
- Neo-Orthodoxy/‘Emerging Church’. ? = ? (Doesn’t know what it is saying.)
- Roman Catholic; Church of Christ, etc. **Faith + Works = Justification** (Faith + religious works/baptism)
- Antinomianism. **Faith = Justification – Works** (New Birth, but no new life)
- The Bible. **Faith = Justification + Works** (We believe; saved & bear fruit)

→ Luther, Calvin, Watson, Bunyan, Flavel, Witherspoon, Spurgeon, Pink, Machen, Packer, Sproul, Stott, etc.