

Subject: *Here We Stand: Faith Alone*

Scripture: *Romans 3:20-28*

The single most important truth that was uncovered and proclaimed during the Reformation was the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. This doctrine was based on the authority and teaching of God's Word or Scripture alone. All these truths brought glory to God alone.

Five "Solas" of the Reformation

- *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone)
- *Solus Christus* (Christ Alone)
- *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone)
- *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone)
- *Soli Deo Gloria* (For the Glory of God Alone)

In this message we are going to look at "Sola Fide" (Faith Alone). First, let's think about these verses in their context.

In the Book of Romans, Paul deals with the problem and then with the solution to that problem. The problem is that God is righteous and all people are unrighteous. To state the problem another way: God is holy and all people are sinful.

Romans 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.*

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

What is the solution? God provides the righteousness of Christ to guilty sinners by His grace and through their faith.

Romans 3:21-22 ²¹ *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;* ²² *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.*

Romans 3:24-26 ²⁴ *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:* ²⁵ *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;* ²⁶ *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

Romans 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Justification is the gift of God's grace by which He declares the believing sinner is righteous in His sight. Justification is a courtroom term. It is the opposite of condemnation. By sin we are condemned and by faith we are justified.

In justification the righteousness of Christ is imputed (credited) to the believer. Justification is the free gift of God and faith is the hand that receives the gift. The Bible is clear that salvation is always and only by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Ephesians 2:8-9⁸ *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

MISTAKEN IDEAS ABOUT FAITH IN CHRIST

Mistake # 1 – Faith is simply believing the truth about Christ

The devil and the demons also believe the truth. True faith involves more than head knowledge. True faith involves trust and commitment.

Mistake # 2 – Faith is making a one-time decision for Christ

True faith is an ongoing commitment to Christ.

Mistake # 3 – Faith produces an emotional response of joy

A person may have joy and not have genuine faith. Jesus told the Parable of the Sower and the Seed in which some seed fell into rocky ground and sprung up, but then withered in the hot sun. Jesus explained what this meant in **Matthew 13:20-21**²⁰ *But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;²¹ Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*

Mistake # 4 – Faith is making a public profession or confession

A profession of faith is not the same thing as real faith. Jesus made that clear in the Sermon on the Mount, **Matthew 7:21-23**²¹ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Mistake # 5 – Faith in Christ should never be questioned or examined

James teaches that faith without works is dead. Scripture says to examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith.

UNMISTAKABLE TRUTHS ABOUT SAVING FAITH

1. Saving faith is the gift of God

Ephesians 2:8-9⁸ *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Saving faith is not the same as natural faith. We live everyday by natural faith. For example, when we drive we believe other people will stay on their side of the road. When we go to the doctor and then take medicine we believe the doctor makes the right diagnosis and prescribes

the right medicine. Saving faith is not like that. God works in our heart to trust Jesus and receive Him as Lord and Savior. Saving faith is not natural faith; it is supernatural faith.

2. Saving faith is based on the truth about Christ

Faith is more than knowing the truth about Christ, but it begins there. We must know the truth, accept the truth, and depend on the truth. **Romans 10:17** *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

3. Saving faith is enduring faith

Faith is not a one-time event. It is a lifetime commitment. The faith that fizzles before the finish had a flaw from the first.

Colossians 1:21-23 ²¹ *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled* ²² *In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight:* ²³ *If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.*

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 ¹ *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;* ² *By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

4. Saving faith involves commitment and obedience to Christ

Some people put their faith in a prayer or an act like walking an aisle or raising their hand. If you ask if they are saved they will say they did this or that. They have faith in their faith. The Bible tells us to put our faith in Christ. Faith is no better than its object. I can put my faith in a chair to hold me up, but if the chair is faulty or weak, that faith won't do any good.

5. Saving faith produces fruit and good works

We are not saved by faith plus works. We are saved by a faith that works. Faith without works is dead. Faith is the way we come to Jesus. Faith is the way we receive the righteousness of Christ.

*Just as I am without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!*

We come to Jesus as we are, but He doesn't leave us as we are. He changes us and gives us a heart to love Him and to trust and obey Him.