

The Five SOLAS of the REFORMATION

To listen to this message as presented at the Reformation 500 Celebration service, 31 October 2017, at the Huguenot Monument in Franschhoek, South Africa, [click here](#), or find on www.frontlinemissionsa.org website Sermon.Audio link.

The Solas that Shattered the Darkness

Post Tenebras Lux! After darkness... light! The Protestant Reformation launched by Professor Martin Luther 500 years ago in Wittenberg, was encapsulated in the Five *Sola* battle cries: ***“Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where the good way is and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls...’ Jeremiah 6:16***

Sola Scriptura!

Scripture alone is our ultimate authority. All authority is limited authority. All authority is delegated by God and is answerable to Him. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Scripture is the truth that sets us free. God’s Word is sharper than any double edged sword. It is the Sword of the Spirit. God’s Word is our milk and meat. It is our daily bread. It is spiritual seed. It never returns void. It is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It is the solid rock foundation which can enable us to endure the storms and floods of life. It is a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces. It is a fire that burns within our hearts. ***“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth.”*** John 17:17

Treasure

The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of Salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are Holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions are immutable. Read the Bible to be wise. Believe it to be saved. Practise it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, spiritual food to sustain you, comfort to encourage you.

Essential

The Bible is the traveller’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword and the Christian’s charter. Here paradise is restored, Heaven opened, the gates of hell defeated.

The Greatest Book

The Bible is the greatest Book ever written. It is the most widely read Book in the world. It is the most translated Book in all of history. It has continued to be the number one bestselling Book in all of history. It is the most valuable Book in the world. The Bible is the most inspiring Book in all of history and it is the most important Book ever written. There is no question that the Bible is the most life changing Book ever written. ***“...But the Word of our God stands forever.”*** Isaiah 40:8

Fountain of Blessings

The Bible has inspired the greatest literature, the greatest art, the greatest achievements of architecture (the cathedrals), the age of exploration, world missions, the rule of law, the separation of powers, checks and balances, representative government, the sanctity of life and so much more. ***“...my heart stands in awe of Your Word.”*** Psalm 119:161

Solid Foundation

It is to the Bible that we owe the legacy of the rule of law, *Lex Rex*, compassion, charity, liberty and justice. The Bible is the chief moral cause and inspiration of everything that is good in this world and the best corrective of all that is evil in society. ***“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*** Colossians 3:16

Infallible

The Bible is the only infallible Guide for everyday life. It is the source of all wise laws and it is a living power that conquers all who oppose it. ***“To the Law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.”*** Isaiah 8:20

Captive to the Word of God

No wonder Professor Martin Luther could declare: *“Unless I am convinced by Scripture, or by clear reasoning, that I am in error, for popes and councils have often erred and contradicted themselves. I cannot recant for I am subject to the Scriptures I have quoted. **My conscience is captive to the Word of God...**”*

Back to the Bible

Truth conquers. We need to go back to the Bible. ***“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”*** Acts 17:11

“Holding fast the faithful Word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” Titus 1:9

“The entrance of Your Words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” Psalm 119:130

Sola Gracia!

“For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

One of the first questions Dr. James Kennedy asked me: *“What comes first: Repentance or Regeneration?”* My answer was: *“Regeneration!”* *“Ah!”* he said, *“You must be a Calvinist!”*

God saves sinners. God alone. His mercy, His undeserved favour, is what saves sinners.

Faith is the gift of God – lest any man boast. There is no room for pride.

I did not chose God. He chose me.

I did not find God. God was never lost! He found me.

I was lost, dead in my trespasses and sins. By God’s grace and mercy, He regenerated me by His sovereign will. From this work of grace, repentance and faith came into my life. Regeneration precedes repentance and faith.

Salvation is all of God.

Amazing Grace

“Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I’m found, was blind, but now I see.”

GRACE can be seen to stand for: God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense. ***“Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever”*** 1 Peter 1:23

Sola Fide!

We contribute nothing to our Salvation – except the sin that made it necessary.

“Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling.”

Our righteousness is as filthy rags.

We have a great debt owing to our God which we can never repay.

Justification is received by faith alone.

FAITH can be seen to stand for: Forsaking All I Trust Him.

“Upon a life I did not live,

*Upon a death I did not die,
Another's life, another's death,
I trust my whole eternity."*

Solus Christus!

Christ alone is the Head of the Church.
Christ is the only Mediator between God and man.
We are lost. Jesus is **the Way**.
We are deceived. Jesus is **the Truth**.
We are dead in our trespasses and sins. Jesus is **the Life**.
He does not just know the way, He is the Way.
He does not just teach the truth, He is the Truth.
He does not just have life, Jesus is the Life.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'." John 14:6

"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Timothy 2:5-6

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God." Hebrews 12:1-2

The Solid Rock

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand."

In Christ Alone

***"In Christ alone,
no guilt in life, no fear in death.
This is the power of Christ in me.
Till on that Cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied.
For every sin on Him was laid,
Here in the death of Christ I live."***

Soli Deo Gloria!

Everything must be done to the glory of God alone.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Your Name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth." Psalm 115:1

Our greatest priority is to love God with all of our heart, with all of our soul,
with all of our mind and with all of our strength.

True love is measured by sacrifice.

We are to fear God alone.

We are to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.

His Great Commission must be our supreme ambition.

We fear God alone. Our motivation is the glory and honour of God alone. For this reason we do not applaud sermons or worship songs during church services.

The chief end of man is to worship God and to glorify Him forever.

Every one Rand coin in South Africa is inscribed with these words: *Soli Deo Gloria*.
Every Rand we spend should be to the Glory of God alone. ***“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*** 1 Corinthians 10:31

“To God be the glory, great things He hath done, so love He the world that He gave us His Son.”

Bible-Based and Christ-Centered

These Five *Solas* which emerged from the Reformation, encapsulate the Theological convictions of the Reformers about the essentials of Christianity. These battle cries sought to call Christians back to the original Message of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the early Church. They challenge our motivations and call us to be Bible-based, Christ-centered, faithful and grateful, as we boldly stand for Christ, fight the good fight of Faith and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Is your conscience captive to the Word of God?
Are you building your life on the solid rock foundation of the Word of God?

“...blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!” Luke 11:28

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