

**“What it Means to be Reformed”; Session # 56, “Sola Fide Introduced”, Prepared
by Pastor Paul Rendall for the Adult Sunday School Class
on November 8th, 2015.**

1. The Gospel must be believed in order for anyone to be saved from their sins and have eternal life.

1st Corinthians 15: 1-4 – “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.” “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Romans 1: 16 and 17 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” “For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

2. The Gospel is the revelation of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. Christ’s righteousness is received by faith alone by those believing in Him.

Romans 3: 19-27 – “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” “For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” “Where is boasting then?” “It is excluded.” By what law?” “Of works?” “No, but by the law of faith.” “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”

Martin Luther’s coming to understand Saving Faith – Taken from Andrew Miller’s Church History

“In the year 1507 he was ordained a priest, at which ceremony his father was present though still dissatisfied with the course of his son. Luther had now received power from the bishop to offer sacrifice for the living and the dead, and to convert, by muttering a few words, the unleavened cake into the real body and blood of the Lord. Luther submitted to and accepted these popish pretensions, though against his convictions, and with fear and trembling; but his soul never completely recovered from the effects of this blasphemous ordination. A judicial blindness as to the scriptural simplicity of the Lord’s supper settled down upon his mind. He was enabled, by the grace of God, to throw off and denounce many of Rome’s superstitions, but never fully her crowning enormity, transubstantiation. Staupitz, the faithful friend and patron of Luther, placed him, at the age of twenty-five, in a position suited for the display of his powerful and active mind, and the further development of his character. He was invited by the

Electoral Frederick, at the suggestion of the vicar-general, to occupy a chair of philosophy in his rising university. He removed to Wittemberg in the year 1508. But though called to be a professor he did not cease to be a monk; he lodged in a cell in the Augustinian convent. The subjects on which he was appointed to lecture were the physics and dialectics of Aristotle. This was uncongenial employment for one who was hungering and thirsting after the word of God. Neither physical science nor moral philosophy suited the spirit of his mind. But again, we may say, it was part of his needed education. He who had passed through the cloister must now occupy for a time the chair of scholastic philosophy, that he might be better fitted to expose the evils, and combat the errors, of both systems, and emancipate the minds of men from their influence. In the meantime, though he was attracting the youths of Wittemberg by the force and style of his lectures, he was zealously applying himself to the study of Greek and Hebrew. His desire was to drink at the fountain; and He who saw the great desire of his heart and the labor of his life opened up the way for him. In a few months after his arrival at the university he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, which entitled him to lecture on theology, or on the Bible. He now felt himself in his proper sphere, and determined to communicate that only which he learnt from the word of God. His first discourses were on the Psalms, and then he passed to Paul's Epistle to the Romans. His precious meditations on these portions in his quiet cell, both at Erfurt and Wittemberg, gave a character to his lectures altogether new. He spoke, not merely as an eloquent schoolman, but as a Christian who felt the power of the great truths he taught. When he reached, in his expositions, the last clause of Romans 1:17, "the just shall live by faith," a light, we may say, beyond the brightness of the sun, filled his whole soul. The Spirit of God clothed the words with light and power to the understanding and to the heart of Luther. The grand doctrine of justification by faith alone he received into his heart as from the voice of God. He now saw that eternal life was to be obtained not by penance but by faith. The whole story of the German Reformation is connected with these few words. In their light he explained the scriptures of the Old and New Testament; by their truth he exposed the falsehoods of popery, he thrilled the heart of Europe, he brought the reign of imposture to an end, and accomplished the great Reformation. Alone he stood before all authority — before all the world — on the truth of the word of God, "the just shall live by faith." God's word is true, popery is a lie; the one must fall, the other must triumph; truth is health to the soul, a lie is deadly poison. These principles of eternal righteousness were now firmly fixed in the heart of Luther by the Spirit of God; and, simple as they may appear, he was enabled, through faith in the word of God, to triumph over popes, bishops, clergy, kings, and emperors, raising the standard of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, without works of law. The great work was now begun, but the workman had still some lessons to learn."