

FIVE REFORMATION SOLAS

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Study 4—Sola Fide

‘The reason why some people do not understand why faith alone justifies is that they do not know what faith is’ (ML). Faith, or belief, is **GIFT**, believe into or upon, movement of trust going out to, laying hold of, resting upon; **the object of confidence**. Total & complete dependence **on Christ**. [Rock of Ages] *Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling; Naked, Come to Thee for dress, Helpless, look to Thee for grace...*

1: Scripture and faith alone: Romans 3:28; 4:5; 1:16 &17. The sinner is justified before God by faith alone, apart from any contribution of human merit or obedience to God’s law; Galatians 3:2.

2: Luther and faith alone: Faith is personal rather than historical knowledge or reliability of gospels. Sinners can do that; *devils believe & tremble*: James 2:19. Saving faith is believing & trusting that Christ was born for us personally & has accomplished for us the work of salvation. Faith is trust in the promises of God. Faith is only as strong as the One in whom we believe & trust. Not the intensity of belief but the reliability of the One in whom we believe. Not the greatness of our faith but the greatness of God. *Even if my faith is weak, I still have exactly the same treasure & the same Christ as others*.

‘Christ is full of grace, life and salvation. The human soul is full of sin, death and damnation. Now let faith come between them. Sin, death and damnation will then be Christ’s; and grace, life & salvation will be the believer’s.’ (Luther) Faith, then, is not assent to an abstract set of doctrines. Rather, it is a ‘wedding ring;’ union between Christ and the believer. ‘Having ingrafted us into his body, Christ makes us partakers, not only of all his benefits, but also of himself’. – *The righteousness of God*, is not a righteousness which judges whether or not we have met the precondition for justification, but the righteousness which is given to us so that we may meet that precondition.

3: Calvin and faith alone: There is no obedience without faith; and there is no faith without the word. Take away the Word and there will be no faith left. Our faith is not rightly founded upon anything except the sole word of God; to prevent it from even being shaken or overthrown by any devices whatever. The tranquillity of faith has no affinity with indolence. The faith of Abraham was directed to the blood of Christ.

4: Faith alone and us: We get into difficulty when we are more concerned about the character of our faith, than about the One in whom faith depends; Jesus Christ. **Hebrews 11: 6;** *without faith it is impossible to please God.*

SOLI DEO GLORIA