



Reformation Sola's

Psalm 29 Ephesians 2:1-10 John 14:1-6

October 25, 2020

Pastor Dave Bolte

Have you ever talked to someone who had no idea what it means to be a Lutheran? Sometimes it's astonishing what people think Lutheran means.

- ⑥ Some believe that we worship Martin Luther as some sort of prophet, saint, or even as a god! The truth is Martin Luther is simply the man God chose 500 years ago to stand up against Roman Catholicism and its false teachings, and bring to light the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ⑥ Some people believe that Lutherans are "*Catholic light*" --> meaning that we're just like Roman Catholics *but not as strict*. These people haven't taken the time to learn the *night and day* difference between Catholicism and Lutheran Doctrine!
- ⑥ I have even heard some people say that we were connected to Martin Luther King Jr. in some way! Martin Luther King Jr. was a civil rights leader in the 1960s; Martin Luther was a theologian and reformer in the 1500s!

Today as we celebrate Reformation Sunday, let's make sure that we *completely understand* and can *clearly define* what it means to be a *conservative* Lutheran!! The world we live in is so full of lies and deception; even that which is considered the "Christian Church" is so badly infected with false doctrine and overrun by false teachers that the truth is hard to find: the Gospel Good News is non-existent, immorality is promoted and celebrated, and Christ Jesus Himself is unknown, ignored, denied, or warped.

It is important that we *completely understand* and can *clearly define* what it means to be a *conservative* Lutheran!! An easy way to do that is to remember **the Solas of the Reformation!** *Sola* is a Latin word that means "alone or only". It is the basis of the English word "solo". The Lutheran Reformation can be summarized with the words **ONLY Scripture, ONLY Grace, ONLY Faith, and ONLY Christ!**

SOLA SCRIPTURA The first is *sola scriptura* – **ONLY SCRIPTURE!** At the time of the Reformation, Scripture wasn't the authority in the Church. Past councils of the Church, and official statements from the Popes --- together these are referred to as the "tradition" of the Church --- were the authority in the Church. They were

considered equal to and even greater than Scripture; and frequently the “tradition” contradicted the Bible.

Luther and the Reformers rejected this; they held that the Bible was the Word of God and the only authority in matters of Christian faith and life. Holy Scriptures are inspired and inerrant; they are the voice of Christ teaching His Church; they are the power of Holy Spirit to save and sanctify people. **The Bible is the Word of God and the only authority in matters of Christian faith and life.**

Here is a well-known saying from the Reformation-era that captures the essence of *sola scriptura*:

“We have another rule, namely, that the WORD OF GOD shall establish articles of faith and no one else, not even an angel.” SMALCALD ARTICLES

Martin Luther and the Reformers held that the Bible was the Word of God and the only authority in matters of Christian faith and life. **As conservative Lutheran Christians, that remains our bold confession even today!** The phrase that describes this is *sola scriptura* – **ONLY SCRIPTURE!**

SOLA GRATIA A second truth of the Lutheran Reformation is taught in the words *sola gratia*: **ONLY GRACE**. Grace is a New Testament word for “gift”, and it highlights that salvation comes to us as a gift from God’s Good hand. God is loving and merciful towards us in Christ; forgiveness, life, and salvation are gifts from God.

In the Reformation times, the Roman Catholic church was teaching that men had to do good works in order to cover over their sin and make God accept them. They taught that Original sin did not totally and thoroughly corrupt us, but it was only an inclination towards evil. They taught that you are not dead in sin, but only bruised or wounded. People were taught that they still had some power within themselves to assist in their salvation.

Luther and the Reformers rejected this; sin totally and thoroughly corrupts us; salvation has to be from God alone because of His grace alone; His goodness, mercy, and kindness saves us. GRACE ALONE: **not** “grace + good works = salvation”. Grace alone brings salvation! The Bible clearly teaches *sola gratia*; here is an example:

For it is by **grace** you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the **gift of God**—not by works, so that no one can boast. EPHESIANS 2:8-9

Martin Luther and the Reformers held that salvation is by GRACE ALONE; God’s goodness, mercy, and kindness saves us! **As conservative Lutheran Christians, that**

remains our bold confession even today! The phrase that describes this is *sola gratia*: **ONLY GRACE!**

SOLA FIDE Grace ALONE leads directly to **FAITH ALONE**: *sola fide*. Faith is the way that salvation becomes your very own. Faith connects you to the Savior Jesus Christ. You trust the Gospel; you believe that God is telling you the truth about Jesus' death and resurrection and that it brings forgiveness, peace, and eternal life to you personally, as an individual. Faith is only possible because of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God.

At the time of the Reformation, people were told that their salvation depended on them and their good works: their prayers, their money, their pilgrimages -- and even after they died, they would have to suffer for their sins in purgatory.

Luther and the Reformers rejected this; the Bible teaches that we are passive in salvation; God is active. God saves us by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Savior! Faith is the way that all the blessings of God are poured into your life -- including forgiveness, peace and eternal life. Faith connects you to Jesus and all the gifts of salvation. Faith is only possible because of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God. The Bible clearly teaches *sola fide*; here is an example:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." ROMANS 1:16-17

Martin Luther and the Reformers held that salvation is by grace through faith alone! Faith is work of God, not your own work. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to create faith within you. **As conservative Lutheran Christians, that remains our bold confession even today!** The phrase that describes this is *sola fide*: **ONLY FAITH!**

SOLUS CHRISTUS *Solus Christus* -- **ONLY CHRIST**, is by far the most important. Everything about the Lutheran Reformation was about Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the World.

During the Reformation days, people were taught that Christ was angry at them because of their sins; and they could not approach Him directly. They had to approach Him through a priest; they had to pray to Him through His mother Mary; they had to turn to the "saints" for good things.

Luther and the Reformers rejected this; they put the focus of the Holy Christian Church -- and every believer -- back on the Lord Jesus Christ. *Solus Christus* -- **ONLY CHRIST**

means that Jesus is the center and focus of everything that we believe, teach and confess.

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. JOHN 14:6

Jesus is the Savior that God sent for us. Jesus lived a holy and *obedient life*, He never sinned; He never broke the 10 Commandments. His holy and obedient life is credited to you through faith, and God now considers you holy and obedient.

Jesus also died a *sacrificial death* for you and all people. He took up your sin and guilt, and He paid the penalty that you deserved. He died on cross. He was sacrificed as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Three days later He rose from the dead never to die again. He is the One we look to for all good things and turn to in times of trouble.

He is the only Savior there is. There is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved. His life and His death are the only works that God accepts on your behalf. Christ alone is the Savior of the world!

Through His life, death and resurrection, you are declared righteous! You are redeemed! You have been given the gifts of forgiveness, life, and eternal salvation!

Far from being angry at you because of sin; He is loving, kind and compassionate and He came in to the world to rescue you from your sin! Christ alone is the Savior of the world! The most important theme of the Lutheran Reformation is *Solus Christus* – **ONLY CHRIST!!** As conservative Lutheran Christians, that remains our bold confession even today!

Solus Christus –

ONLY CHRIST

means that Jesus is the center and focus of everything that we believe, teach

These are the things that define *conservative* Lutheranism: *sola scriptura*, *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, and *solus Christus* ---

Today as we celebrate Reformation Sunday, make sure that you *completely understand* and can *clearly define* what it means to be a *conservative* Lutheran!! An easy way to do that is to remember **the *Solas* of the Reformation!** The Lutheran Reformation can be summarized with the words **ONLY Scripture, ONLY Grace, ONLY Faith, ONLY Christ!**

May you know them, believe them,

and confess them to the world!

AMEN!

Lord of all History, we thank you for the Lutheran Reformation. We thank you Martin Luther and all the Reformers whom you worked through to bring the Gospel of your Son Jesus Christ to the forefront of the Holy Christian Church. Help us to completely understand and clearly define : **Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, and Solus Christus --- so that we may glorify you **ALONE** in all things. Protect us from false teachers, and strengthen our faith through Your Word and Sacraments. We pray this to the Father's glory, in the Name of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, Amen.**

Psalm 29

Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over many waters.

4 The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

11 May the LORD give strength to his people!
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the ³ power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved-- ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

John 14:1-6

Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4 And you know the way to where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.