



# The Reformation

A REVIEW OF THE REFORMERS AND THE FIVE SOLAS OF THE REFORMATION  
LESSONS 4 & 5 – THE FIVE SOLAS  
PASTOR PHILLIP M WAY

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ALL SCRIPTURE TAKEN FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION. COPYRIGHT © 1982 BY THOMAS NELSON, INC. USED BY PERMISSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

# Reformed Christians

- ▶ Reformed Theology has been defined by the great Presbyterian pastor James Boice as “theology solidly based on the Bible itself.” He goes on to say:
- ▶ Reformed Christians hold to the doctrines characteristic of all Christians, including the Trinity, the true deity and true humanity of Jesus Christ, the necessity of Jesus’ atonement for sin, the church as a divinely ordained institution, the inspiration of the Bible. The requirement that Christians live moral lives, and the resurrection of the body. They hold other doctrines in common with evangelical Christians, such as justification by faith alone, the need for the new birth, the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ, and the Great Commission.

# Reformed Christians

- ▶ But the specifics, the signature beliefs of those who are reformed in their theology, he defined as the commitment to the doctrine of Scripture, the sovereignty of God, the Doctrines of Grace, and the cultural mandate to work to bring people to Jesus Christ the Lord.
- ▶ Many others have rightly summarized the great truths and foundation of the reformation as the Five Solas. Sola, the Latin word for alone, is a distinctive term in Reformed Theology.
- ▶ Our ministry, in the reformed tradition, agrees with James Boice and readily identifies our belief in the doctrines of grace and the five solas of the reformation. So we will take a look in the coming week at these Five Solas.
- ▶ What are the Five Solas? Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus, Soli Deo Gloria. How do we relate to them today? How are we actively carrying on in the spirit of the reformation?

# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ **Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689 – The Holy Scriptures**
- ▶ The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience. Although the light of nature and the works of creation and providence manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God so much that man is left without any excuse, they are not sufficient to provide that knowledge of God and His will which is necessary for salvation.

# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ **Charles Spurgeon** (from *The Treasury of David*, commentary on Psalm 19:7)
- ▶ The law of the Lord is perfect;" by which he means not merely the law of Moses but the doctrine of God, the whole run and rule of sacred Writ. The doctrine revealed by God he declares to be perfect, and yet David had but a very small part of the Scriptures, and if a fragment, and that the darkest and most historical portion, be perfect, what must the entire volume be? How more than perfect is the book which contains the clearest possible display of divine love, and gives us an open vision of redeeming grace. The gospel is a complete scheme or law of gracious salvation, presenting to the needy sinner everything that his terrible necessities can possibly demand. There are no redundancies and no omissions in the Word of God, and in the plan of grace; why then do men try to paint this lily and gild this refined gold? The gospel is perfect in all its parts, and perfect as a whole: it is a crime to add to it, treason to alter it, and felony to take from it.

# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ **The Cambridge Declaration: A Statement from the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals**
- ▶ Evangelical churches today are increasingly dominated by the spirit of this age rather than by the Spirit of Christ. As evangelicals, we call ourselves to repent of this sin and to recover the historic Christian faith.
- ▶ In the course of history words change. In our day this has happened to the word “evangelical.” In the past it served as a bond of unity between Christians from a wide diversity of church traditions. Historic evangelicalism was confessional. It embraced the essential truths of Christianity as those were defined by the great ecumenical councils of the church. In addition, evangelicals also shared a common heritage in the “solas” of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation.
- ▶ Today the light of the Reformation has been significantly dimmed. The consequence is that the word “evangelical” has become so inclusive as to have lost its meaning. We face the peril of losing the unity it has taken centuries to achieve. Because of this crisis and because of our love of Christ, his gospel and his church, we endeavor to assert anew our commitment to the central truths of the Reformation and of historic evangelicalism. These truths we affirm not because of their role in our traditions, but because we believe that they are central to the Bible.

# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ Sola Scriptura: The Erosion of Authority. Scripture alone is the inerrant rule of the church's life, but the evangelical church today has separated Scripture from its authoritative function. In practice, the church is guided, far too often, by the culture. Therapeutic technique, marketing strategies, and the beat of the entertainment world often have far more to say about what the church wants, how it functions and what it offers, than does the Word of God. Pastors have neglected their rightful oversight of worship, including the doctrinal content of the music. As biblical authority has been abandoned in practice, as its truths have faded from Christian consciousness, and as its doctrines have lost their saliency, the church has been increasingly emptied of its integrity, moral authority and direction.
- ▶ Rather than adapting Christian faith to satisfy the felt needs of consumers, we must proclaim the law as the only measure of true righteousness and the gospel as the only announcement of saving truth. Biblical truth is indispensable to the church's understanding, nurture and discipline.

# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ Scripture must take us beyond our perceived needs to our real needs and liberate us from seeing ourselves through the seductive images, cliches, promises and priorities of mass culture. It is only in the light of God's truth that we understand ourselves aright and see God's provision for our need. The Bible, therefore, must be taught and preached in the church. Sermons must be expositions of the Bible and its teachings, not expressions of the preacher's opinions or the ideas of the age. We must settle for nothing less than what God has given.
- ▶ The work of the Holy Spirit in personal experience cannot be disengaged from Scripture. The Spirit does not speak in ways that are independent of Scripture. Apart from Scripture we would never have known of God's grace in Christ. The biblical Word, rather than spiritual experience, is the test of truth.



# Sola Scriptura – Scripture Alone

- ▶ We reaffirm the inerrant Scripture to be the sole source of written divine revelation, which alone can bind the conscience. The Bible alone teaches all that is necessary for our salvation from sin and is the standard by which all Christian behavior must be measured.
- ▶ We deny that any creed, council or individual may bind a Christian's conscience, that the Holy Spirit speaks independently of or contrary to what is set forth in the Bible, or that personal spiritual experience can ever be a vehicle of revelation.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ Salvation is by grace alone. The Scriptures are quite clear on this matter. We cannot work, earn, buy, merit, deserve, or win salvation for ourselves.
- ▶ Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
- ▶ This grace has been given to us in the form of a covenant, the New Covenant made with the Blood of Christ.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ Hebrews 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8Because finding fault with them, He says: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah– 9not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 10For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, “Know the LORD,” for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” 13In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ **Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689 – God's Covenant**
- ▶ 1. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience to Him as their Creator, yet they could never have attained the reward of life except by some voluntary condescension on God's part, and this He has been pleased to express in the form of a covenant.
- ▶ 2. Moreover, as man had brought himself under the curse of the law by his fall, it pleased the Lord to make a covenant of grace. In this covenant He freely offers to sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring from them faith in Him that they may be saved, and promising to give to all who are appointed to eternal life His Holy Spirit to make them willing and able to believe.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ 3. This covenant is revealed through the Gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman, and afterwards by further steps until the full revelation of it became complete in the New Testament. The covenant of salvation rests upon an eternal covenant transaction between the Father and the Son about the redemption of the elect. It is solely by the grace of this covenant that all the descendants of fallen Adam who have ever been saved have obtained life and blessed immortality, because man is now utterly incapable of gaining acceptance with God on the terms by which Adam stood in his state of innocency.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

## ▶ **Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689 – Effectual Call**

- ▶ 1. Those whom God has predestinated to life, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time to effectually call by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death which they are in by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. He enlightens their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God. He takes away their heart of stone and gives to them a heart of flesh. He renews their wills, and by His almighty power, causes them to desire and pursue that which is good. He effectually draws them to Jesus Christ, yet in such a way that they come absolutely freely, being made willing by His grace.
- ▶ 2. This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not on account of anything at all foreseen in man. It is not made because of any power or agency in the creature who is wholly passive in the matter. Man is dead in sins and trespasses until quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit. By this he is enabled to answer the call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed by it. This enabling power is no less power than that which raised up Christ from the dead.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

## ▶ **Jonathan Edwards**

- ▶ It was of free grace that God had any thoughts or designs of rescuing mankind after the fall. If there had not been an immense fountain of goodness in God, he would never have entertained any thoughts at all of ever redeeming us after our defection. Man was happy enough at first, and might have continued so to all eternity, if he would; he was not compelled to fall. If he had not willfully and sinfully rebelled against God, he would never have been driven forth like an unworthy wretch, as he was. But although God had been so overflowing in his bounty to him as to make him head over the lower creation and ruler of all other creatures, and had planted a garden on purpose for his delight, and would have fixed him in an eternal happiness only on the reasonable condition of his obeying the easy commands of his maker; but yet notwithstanding all, he rebelled and turned over, from God to the devil, out of a wicked ambition of being a god himself not content in that happy state that he was in as man and so rebelled against God's authority.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ Now who but God of boundless grace, would not have been provoked, after this, to leave him as he was, in the miserable state into which he had brought himself by his disobedience; resolving to help him no more, leaving him to himself and to the punishment he had deserved, leaving him in the devil's hands where he had thrown himself, not being contented in the arms of his Creator; who, but one of boundless grace, would ever have entertained any thoughts of finding out a way for his recovery?
- ▶ God had no manner of need of us, or of our praises. He has enough in himself for himself, and neither needs nor desires any additions of happiness, and if he did need the worship of his creatures, he had thousands and ten thousands of angels, and if he had not enough, he could create more; or, he could have glorified his justice in man's eternal destruction and ruin, and have with infinite ease created other beings, more perfect and glorious than man, eternally to sing his praises.



# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ Regeneration is by the Spirit: John 3:5-6–“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” And verse 8– “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”
- ▶ The renewing of the soul is by the Holy Ghost: Titus 3:5– “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” A new heart is given by God’s putting His Spirit within us: Ezekiel 36:26,27– “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.” Quickening of the dead soul is by the Spirit: John 6:63– “It is the Spirit that quickeneth.”

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ Sanctification is by the Spirit of God: 2 Thess. 2:13– “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” Romans 15:16– “That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” 1 Cor. 6:11– “Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Peter 1:2– “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” All grace in the heart is the fruit of the Spirit: Gal. 5:22, 23– “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” Eph. 5:9– “The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.” Hence the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of grace, (Heb. 10:29.)

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

## ▶ **The Cambridge Declaration**

- ▶ Unwarranted confidence in human ability is a product of fallen human nature. This false confidence now fills the evangelical world; from the self-esteem gospel, to the health and wealth gospel, from those who have transformed the gospel into a product to be sold and sinners into consumers who want to buy, to others who treat Christian faith as being true simply because it works. This silences the doctrine of justification regardless of the official commitments of our churches.
- ▶ God's grace in Christ is not merely necessary but is the sole efficient cause of salvation. We confess that human beings are born spiritually dead and are incapable even of cooperating with regenerating grace.

# Sola Gratia – Grace Alone

- ▶ We reaffirm that in salvation we are rescued from God's wrath by his grace alone. It is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ by releasing us from our bondage to sin and raising us from spiritual death to spiritual life.
- ▶ We deny that salvation is in any sense a human work. Human methods, techniques or strategies by themselves cannot accomplish this transformation. Faith is not produced by our unregenerated human nature.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ In proclaiming the truth that salvation is by grace alone we understand from the same text, Eph 2:8-9, that God gives with His grace the faith we need in order to believe Him and obey the gospel. Our justification is solely by faith. It is not faith that is alone (faith without works), but by active, living faith alone (faith that works). It is not by the works that faith accomplishes. It is by the instrumentality of that gift, by faith alone, that we are made righteous before God.
- ▶ **The Puritan Catechism**
- ▶ 32. Q. What is justification?
- ▶ A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7), and accepts us as righteous in his sight (2 Cor. 5:21) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom. 5:19), and received by faith alone (Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9).

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ **Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689 – Justification**
- ▶ 1. Those whom God effectually calls He also freely justifies, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting them as righteous, not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone. They are not justified because God reckons as their righteousness either their faith, their believing, or any other act of evangelical obedience. They are justified wholly and solely because God imputes to them Christ's righteousness. He imputes to them Christ's active obedience to the whole law and His passive obedience in death. They receive Christ's righteousness by faith, and rest on Him. They do not possess or produce this faith themselves, it is the gift of God.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ 2. Faith which receives Christ's righteousness and depends on Him is the sole instrument of justification, yet this faith is not alone in the person justified, but is always accompanied by all the other saving graces. And it is not a dead faith, but works by love.
- ▶ 3. Christ, by His obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified, and by the sacrifice of himself through the blood of His cross, underwent instead of them the penalty due to them, so making a proper, real, and full satisfaction to God's justice on their behalf. Yet because He was given by the Father for them, and because His obedience and satisfaction was accepted instead of theirs (and both freely, not because of anything in them), therefore they are justified entirely and solely by free grace, so that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ 4. From all eternity God decreed to justify all the elect, and Christ, in the fullness of time, died for their sins, and rose again for their justification. Nevertheless, they are not personally justified until the Holy Spirit, in due time, actually applies Christ to them.
- ▶ 5. God continues to forgive the sins of those who are justified, and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may because of their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure. In that condition they will not usually have the light of God's countenance restored to them until they humble themselves, confess their sins, ask for pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.
- ▶ 6. The justification of believers during the Old Testament period was in all these respects exactly the same as the justification of New Testament believers.



# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

## ▶ **Martin Luther**

- ▶ Faith is a work of God in us, which changes us and brings us to birth anew from God (cf. John 1). It kills the old Adam, makes us completely different people in heart, mind, senses, and all our powers, and brings the Holy Spirit with it. What a living, creative, active powerful thing is faith! It is impossible that faith ever stop doing good. Faith doesn't ask whether good works are to be done, but, before it is asked, it has done them. It is always active. Whoever doesn't do such works is without faith; he gropes and searches about him for faith and good works but doesn't know what faith or good works are. Even so, he chatters on with a great many words about faith and good works.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ Faith is a living, unshakeable confidence in God's grace. This kind of trust in and knowledge of God's grace makes a person joyful, confident, and happy with regard to God and all creatures. This is what the Holy Spirit does by faith. Through faith, a person will do good to everyone without coercion, willingly and happily; he will serve everyone, suffer everything for the love and praise of God, who has shown him such grace. It is as impossible to separate works from faith as burning and shining from fire. Therefore be on guard against your own false ideas and against the chatterers who think they are clever enough to make judgments about faith and good works but who are in reality the biggest fools. Ask God to work faith in you; otherwise you will remain eternally without faith, no matter what you try to do or fabricate.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ In Romans chapter 5, St. Paul comes to the fruits and works of faith, namely: joy, peace, love for God and for all people; in addition: assurance, steadfastness, confidence, courage, and hope in sorrow and suffering. All of these follow where faith is genuine, because of the overflowing good will that God has shown in Christ: he had him die for us before we could ask him for it, yes, even while we were still his enemies. Thus we have established that faith, without any good works, makes just.
- ▶ **The Cambridge Declaration**
- ▶ Justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. This is the article by which the church stands or falls. Today this article is often ignored, distorted or sometimes even denied by leaders, scholars and pastors who claim to be evangelical. Although fallen human nature has always recoiled from recognizing its need for Christ's imputed righteousness, modernity greatly fuels the fires of this discontent with the biblical Gospel. We have allowed this discontent to dictate the nature of our ministry and what it is we are preaching.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ Many in the church growth movement believe that sociological understanding of those in the pew is as important to the success of the gospel as is the biblical truth which is proclaimed. As a result, theological convictions are frequently divorced from the work of the ministry. The marketing orientation in many churches takes this even further, erasing the distinction between the biblical Word and the world, robbing Christ's cross of its offense, and reducing Christian faith to the principles and methods which bring success to secular corporations.
- ▶ While the theology of the cross may be believed, these movements are actually emptying it of its meaning. There is no gospel except that of Christ's substitution in our place whereby God imputed to him our sin and imputed to us his righteousness. Because he bore our judgment, we now walk in his grace as those who are forever pardoned, accepted and adopted as God's children. There is no basis for our acceptance before God except in Christ's saving work, not in our patriotism, churchly devotion or moral decency. The gospel declares what God has done for us in Christ. It is not about what we can do to reach him.

# Sola Fide – Faith Alone

- ▶ We reaffirm that justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. In justification Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as the only possible satisfaction of God's perfect justice.
- ▶ We deny that justification rests on any merit to be found in us, or upon the grounds of an infusion of Christ's righteousness in us, or that an institution claiming to be a church that denies or condemns sola fide can be recognized as a legitimate church.

# Solus Christus – Christ Alone

- ▶ The gospel is exclusive. The only Lord, the only Savior, the only Redeemer of fallen man is Jesus Christ. Some have said that any sincere person from any religion or faith will eventually make it to heaven. Jesus disagrees! He says quite matter-of-factly that He is the only way, eternal life is found only in Him.
- ▶ **The Puritan Catechism**
- ▶ 20. Q. Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?
- ▶ A. The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5), who being the eternal Son of God, became man (Jn. 1:14), and so was and continues to be God and man, in two distinct natures and one person for ever (1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 2:9).

# Solus Christus – Christ Alone

- ▶ **Second London Baptist Confession of Faith, 1689 – Christ the Mediator**
- ▶ The Lord Jesus, by His perfect obedience and sacrifice of Himself which He, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up to God, has fully satisfied the justice of God, has procured reconciliation, and has purchased an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven for all those whom the Father has given to Him.
- ▶ This office of Mediator between God and man is proper only to Christ, Who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of the Church by the Free Will of God, and this office may not be transferred from Him to any other, either in whole or in part.

# Solus Christus – Christ Alone

## ▶ **John Calvin**

- ▶ The way, the truth, and the life. He lays down three degrees, as if he had said, that he is the beginning, and the middle, and the end; and hence it follows that we ought to begin with him, to continue in him, and to end in him. We certainly ought not to seek for higher wisdom than that which leads us to eternal life, and he testifies that this life is to be found in him. Now the method of obtaining life is, to become new creatures. He declares, that we ought not to seek it anywhere else, and, at the same time, reminds us, that he is the way, by which alone we can arrive at it. That he may not fail us in any respect, he stretches out the hand to those who are going astray, and stoops so low as to guide. Presenting himself as a leader, he does not leave his people in the middle of the course, but makes them partakers of the truth. At length he makes them enjoy the fruit of it, which is the most excellent and delightful thing that can be imagined.



# Solus Christus – Christ Alone

- ▶ No man cometh to the Father. This is an explanation of the former statement', for he is the way, because he leads us to the Father, and he is the truth and the life, because in him we perceive the Father. As to calling on God, it may indeed be said, with truth, that no prayers are heard but through the intercession of Christ; but as Christ does not now speak about prayer, we ought simply to understand the meaning to be, that men contrive for themselves true labyrinths, whenever, after having forsaken Christ, they attempt to come to God. For Christ proves that he is the life, because God, with whom is the fountain of life, (Psalm 36:9) cannot be enjoyed in any other way than in Christ. Wherefore all theology, when separated from Christ, is not only vain and confused, but is also mad, deceitful, and spurious; for, though the philosophers sometimes utter excellent sayings, yet they have nothing but what is short-lived, and even mixed up with wicked and erroneous sentiments.

# Solus Christus – Christ Alone

## ▶ **The Cambridge Declaration**

- ▶ As evangelical faith becomes secularized, its interests have been blurred with those of the culture. The result is a loss of absolute values, permissive individualism, and a substitution of wholeness for holiness, recovery for repentance, intuition for truth, feeling for belief, chance for providence, and immediate gratification for enduring hope. Christ and his cross have moved from the center of our vision.
- ▶ We reaffirm that our salvation is accomplished by the mediatorial work of the historical Christ alone. His sinless life and substitutionary atonement alone are sufficient for our justification and reconciliation to the Father.
- ▶ We deny that the gospel is preached if Christ's substitutionary work is not declared and faith in Christ and his work is not solicited.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ God alone is worthy of worship and deserves, yes even rightly demands, that we glorify Him alone. When you see God in His glory, even if only with “eyes of faith”, you cannot help but glorify Him. He alone is worthy of glory and honor and praise.
- ▶ **Puritan Catechism**
- ▶ 1. Q. What is the chief end of man?
- ▶ A. Man's chief end is to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31), and to enjoy him for ever (Ps. 73:25-26).
- ▶ 2. Q. What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify him?
- ▶ A. The Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Eph. 2:20; 2 Tim. 3:16) is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify God and enjoy him (1 Jn. 1:3).

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

## ▶ **Thomas Watson**

- ▶ Glorifying God consists in four things: 1. Appreciation, 2. Adoration, 3. Affection, 4. Subjection.
- ▶ 1. Appreciation. To glorify God is to set God highest in our thoughts, and to have a venerable esteem of him. 'Thou, Lord, art most high for evermore.' (Psa. 92:8). 'Thou art exalted far above all gods.' (Psa. 97:9). There is in God all that may draw forth both wonder and delight; there is a constellation of all beauties. We glorify God, when we are God-admirers; admire his attributes, which are the glistening beams by which the divine nature shines forth; his promises which are the charter of free grace, and the spiritual cabinet where the pearl of price is hid; the noble effects of his power and wisdom in making the world, which is called 'the work of his fingers' (Psa. 8:3). To glorify God is to have God-admiring thoughts; to esteem him most excellent, and search for diamonds in this rock only.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ 2. Adoration. Glorifying God consists in adoration, or worship. 'Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness' (Psa. 29:2). Divine worship must be such as God himself has appointed, else it is offering strange fire (Lev. 10:1). The Lord would have Moses make the tabernacle, 'according to the pattern in the mount' (Ex. 25:40). He must not leave out anything in the pattern, nor add to it. If God was so exact and curious about the place of worship, how exact will he be about the matter of his worship! Surely here everything must be according to the pattern prescribed in his word.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ 3. Affection. This is part of the glory we give to God, who counts himself glorified when he is loved (Deut. 6:5). 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.' This love is exuberant, not a few drops, but a stream. It is superlative; we give God the best of our love, the cream of it. It is intense and ardent. True saints are seraphims, burning in holy love to God. Thus to love God is to glorify him. He who is the chief of our happiness has the chief of our affections.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ 4. Subjection. This is when we dedicate ourselves to God, and stand ready dressed for his service. Thus the angels in heaven glorify him; they wait on his throne, and are ready to take a commission from him; therefore, they are represented by the cherubims with wings displayed, to show how swift they are in their obedience. We glorify God when we are devoted to his service; our head studies for him, our tongue pleads for him, and our hands relieve his members. The wise men that came to Christ did not only bow the knee to him, but presented him with gold and myrrh (Matt. 2:11). So we must not only bow the knee, give God worship, but bring presents of golden obedience. We glorify God when we stick at no service, when we fight under the banner of his gospel against an enemy, and say to him as David to King Saul, 'Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine' (1 Sam. 17:32).

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ **The Cambridge Declaration**

- ▶ Wherever in the church biblical authority has been lost, Christ has been displaced, the gospel has been distorted, or faith has been perverted, it has always been for one reason: our interests have displaced God's and we are doing his work in our way. The loss of God's centrality in the life of today's church is common and lamentable. It is this loss that allows us to transform worship into entertainment, gospel preaching into marketing, believing into technique, being good into feeling good about ourselves, and faithfulness into being successful. As a result, God, Christ and the Bible have come to mean too little to us and rest too inconsequentially upon us.



# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ God does not exist to satisfy human ambitions, cravings, the appetite for consumption, or our own private spiritual interests. We must focus on God in our worship, rather than the satisfaction of our personal needs. God is sovereign in worship; we are not. Our concern must be for God's kingdom, not our own empires, popularity or success.
- ▶ We reaffirm that because salvation is of God and has been accomplished by God, it is for God's glory and that we must glorify him always. We must live our entire lives before the face of God, under the authority of God and for his glory alone.
- ▶ We deny that we can properly glorify God if our worship is confused with entertainment, if we neglect either Law or Gospel in our preaching, or if self-improvement, self-esteem or self-fulfillment are allowed to become alternatives to the gospel.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ The faithfulness of the evangelical church in the past contrasts sharply with its unfaithfulness in the present. Earlier in this century, evangelical churches sustained a remarkable missionary endeavor, and built many religious institutions to serve the cause of biblical truth and Christ's kingdom. That was a time when Christian behavior and expectations were markedly different from those in the culture. Today they often are not. The evangelical world today is losing its biblical fidelity, moral compass and missionary zeal.
- ▶ We repent of our worldliness. We have been influenced by the "gospels" of our secular culture, which are no gospels. We have weakened the church by our own lack of serious repentance, our blindness to the sins in ourselves which we see so clearly in others, and our inexcusable failure to adequately tell others about God's saving work in Jesus Christ.

# Soli Deo Gloria: Glory to God Alone

- ▶ We also earnestly call back erring professing evangelicals who have deviated from God's Word in the matters discussed in this Declaration. This includes those who declare that there is hope of eternal life apart from explicit faith in Jesus Christ, who claim that those who reject Christ in this life will be annihilated rather than endure the just judgment of God through eternal suffering, or who claim that evangelicals and Roman Catholics are one in Jesus Christ even where the biblical doctrine of justification is not believed.
- ▶ The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals asks all Christians to give consideration to implementing this Declaration in the church's worship, ministry, policies, life and evangelism. For Christ's sake. Amen.

# The Five Solas

## ▶ **Conclusion**

- ▶ Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus, Soli Deo Gloria – these are the Five Solas, the outworking and fruit of the Protestant Reformation. Indeed we see that the reformation today can be found as an ongoing reality in the lives of those who believe and live by these doctrines. The reformation is alive. It is not a finished work of the past. It is not just an accomplishment of those great reformers and theologians of 500 years ago. It is present with us. It is here, in our midst, as we confess that the Scripture alone is our source of authority in all matters of faith and practice. In having a high view of Scripture we have a high view of God and understand that He has saved us by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. This He has done for His glory alone.

# The Five Solas

- ▶ Where is the reformation today? Are you always reforming? Are you always striving to yield yourself as a living sacrifice to God, refusing to be conformed to this world but be transformed by renewing your mind in the Scriptures daily? Are you more and more like Jesus? Then you are always reforming. This is your history, your heritage, sealed with the blood of the martyrs and delivered to you today. Four hundred and eighty-eight years after those 95 Theses were nailed to a door, you can proclaim with the hymn writer, “My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought, my sin not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more, even so, it is well with my soul.”
- ▶ Take up your cross, having been crucified with Christ, and continue on, ever and always reforming until we see Jesus, for only then will the reformation be complete. Then we will be like Him to the everlasting glory of God. Amen.