

Solus Christus

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It's very good to be back after being away on Sunday. Pastor Brian Swillum sends his greetings from Calvary Baptist Church in Escanaba. He thinks highly of all of you and it was a wonderful time for Nancy and me to be with their congregation. I taught five times on Saturday and Sunday, five times total on the doctrine of grace and it was just a really good time but this is my favorite place to preach right here and you are my favorite audience, and so while sometimes I will have to go away from time to time, I want you to always know that this is my anchor and this is the place that I belong and where I love to be.

So with that said, we come back to our series on the Five Solas and we're on number 4 in our sequence here today. We've considered Sola Scriptura, the idea that Scripture alone is our source of truth; Sola Gratia, that man cannot save himself by his works but rather he must be saved by the grace of God alone; Sola Fide in which we considered the nature of justification and the nature of saving faith; and that brings us tonight to Solus Christus, Christ alone, in other words, the fourth great Sola in the sequence in which we are treating them. At the start, I think it's good to remember that it's not enough to simply have faith for the sake of faith, we must know who the proper object of faith is if we are to be saved. It's not enough as the 12 Step Programs would say, to have faith in a higher power and you just define whoever that power might be to satisfy your own soul. No, it doesn't work that way. Faith, true faith must be in the true object of faith or else it is futile, it is wasted, it still leaves a man in his sin. So the question is who or what is the proper object of this faith that would save a man from sin? In what or in whom do we hope? And that question is answered by Solus Christus, we hope in Christ alone, our faith is in Christ alone.

Solus Christus means that Jesus Christ alone provides the necessary work of salvation. Nothing adds to his merit. No one adds to his merit. No one helps us intercede or no one else mediates for us before God, not Mary, not Buddha, not Mohammad, not anyone else. Christ alone is the mediator between God and man and you must believe in the true Christ in order to be saved and you must understand the true nature of his work in order to be saved, and that is encompassed in the Reformation doctrine of Solus Christus.

What I've tried to do, however poorly I may have executed it, what I have tried to do is to bring each of these great Solas and to define them in two or three different terms to keep it basic and to give us things that we can grasp our mind around and that we could build

on for future study if we decided to pursue these things later. It's one of the ways that I preach. I try to keep things direct. I try to keep them clear. I try to keep them, in a sense, basic because I believe that if we can grasp the basics of things, then we're able to move on into other things. Sometimes it is very easy for a preacher to just say so much about so many different things in every message that he tries to preach that you end up saying nothing at all because it just all becomes lost in the weight of detail and you can't find it and there's no anchors to put your mind on. So I try to approach preaching from this perspective of two or three or four things and we can anchor that and that's what we've tried to do in this series for better or for worse.

Tonight when we talk about Solus Christus, here's what I want you to remember: why is it Christ alone, why is Christ alone the proper object of saving faith? This is very basic, it is very clear. Even though it sounds simple, it's not simplistic, it's just that these things can be understood and grasped at a very clear and basic level. Why is it Solus Christus? Why is Christ alone the one who can provide the necessary path of salvation for us? Two points tonight: it is the person of Christ and it is the work of Christ. What I'm going to tell you is nothing that you haven't heard me say before but when you understand the implications of the person of Christ and the work of Christ, you can see why it must result in a conclusion of Solus Christus, Christ alone. No one else can save us. No one else is qualified to save us. No one else has done the work that is necessary to save us and no one ever could. No one has. No one is. No one ever will because there is a uniqueness about Christ and there is a uniqueness about his work for sinners that mean that only he can be the Savior of any sinner before God and that those who reject him, those that ignore him, those that have never heard of him, will most certainly be damned. They cannot go to heaven apart from Christ and that's what we want to explain in our brief time here this evening.

Now, just by way of reminder starting with the very basic things, salvation, spiritual deliverance from sin is necessary for every man, woman and child because men are separated from God by their sin. By nature and by choice, mankind is a sinful rebel against God. He is not pleasing to God in his own right. It is not true to say that all men everywhere are children of God in the precise sense of belonging to him and being secure in his salvation. To the contrary, Scripture tells us that apart from Jesus Christ all men everywhere are under God's wrath; that they are on the receiving end of his displeasure in this life and if they die in that state, they will face the eternal fury of the wrath of God for their sin and rebellion against him.

In John 3:36 it says that, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." You see in that verse and in others that we will look at the exclusivity of Christ; that there is no other Savior. You must believe in the Son to have eternal life. The one who does not do that and manifests his unbelief by his disobedience to Christ, without exception the wrath of God abides on him.

So one of the implications that this has for our souls and our attitudes toward God is that this teaches us not to trifle with Christ. This teaches us to take him seriously; to take him

earnestly; to hear what he has to say with willing and submissive ears because he is the only one who can save us. We cannot wash away our own sins. We cannot reach God anymore than we could take a running jump and traverse the width of the Grand Canyon on our own human power. You would sooner jump the Grand Canyon with your feet than you would get to heaven on your own merit and efforts. You would sooner jump across an ocean than you would jump the gulf that exists between you and God. You say, "But that's impossible. No one can do that. No one can jump that far." To which we say, precisely, that's the point. It is an impossibility. It is impossible for a man to reach God on his own; to reach God through his own intuition; to reach God through his own righteousness. There is no such thing and there never will be.

So for us in this room as we come together more and more as a body of Christ, we have to gather around these truths and rally around them in a way that is clear in our minds and that become the central focus of our conviction, and to not be brought in to the spirit of our age that tells us that all roads lead to God. They don't. To think that there's a spark of divinity in each man, there's not. There's nothing like that. It's a figment of man's imagination. It is a self-flattery of man to think that he can go to God apart from Christ. So we just find it very essential to speak these things plainly and clearly. Here's the point, beloved: because our sin separates us from God, because the wrath of God is against sinners, because we cannot fix what we have broken, because we are like Humpty Dumpty having fallen off the wall, we can't put righteousness back together again, there is no place to start. You can't stitch it together. We are ruined. We are lost without Christ and that is why Solus Christus is necessary. You and I need to have someone intercede for us before God and if we do not have that, we will be lost.

Now, pivoting from the need for Solus Christus to the reality of it, here's the wonderful news that in the person of Jesus Christ, God bridges the gulf and comes to man. God stepped across the gulf. The things that are impossible for man to do, God has done in the person of Christ and what the Gospel of Jesus Christ declares is this, that Jesus Christ who is God Incarnate, died for sinners and was raised from the dead on the third day after he had lived a perfectly righteous life on earth, and having offered his life on the cross as a sacrifice for sinners, he now offers full forgiveness of sin to everyone who repents of sin and believes in him. That is the only message that can save a sinner's soul. Everything else is a false gospel that will lead them to damnation. Solus Christus, the Gospel alone, the Gospel as we just declared it is the only message that can bring salvation to a sinner. It's the only one.

Now, I realize and I've been accused of in one way or another, of arrogance in pastoring a church called Truth Community Church. A sympathetic interviewer asked me one time, he said, "Don't you think that's kind of arrogant to name your church Truth Community Church?" Well, listen, forgetting the name of our church, here's what we want to see tonight about Solus Christus, is that the Bible does not apologize when it says that Jesus Christ is the only one who can save men from their sins. In fact, as we're going to see, that is the claim that Christ himself made and so it is impossible to be a true Christian based on the words of Christ, to name him as Lord and simultaneously say that there are other paths of salvation, that there are other ways to reach God apart from Christ. A true

Christian would not say that or at the very very least, a true Christian would not resist that idea when it is presented to them. Maybe somebody in the fog of the early days of their conversion might not have that clearly established in their mind, but no one could be a Christian and deny with understanding what I have just said. Jesus Christ is the only one who can save men from their sins and you see this in the words of Jesus himself.

Look at chapter 8 of John, chapter 8, verse 24. In John 8:24 Jesus said, "I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Unless you recognize Christ as the exclusive Savior of mankind who did the work of salvation in his own person in the cross, unless you believe that, unless you entrust yourself completely and wholeheartedly and unreservedly to him, you will die in your sins. And beloved, let me just say that whatever the full eternal consequences of that condition might be, you don't want to know what that turns out like. No one wants to know what it is like to die in sin because to die in that condition is to have your doom sealed and to have God turning from one who offers forgiveness to you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to have him turn into a final Judge whose fury and wrath and justice must be satisfied to the uttermost and eternity is not long enough for you to pay for a single sin of your own. So this is just very very crucial and Jesus sets himself as the one and only dividing line between doom and deliverance. Look at it again with me. Let these words sink into your heart, "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

Now, Jesus states this in a positive way. If you'll look over at John 11:25 he states it in the negative way, "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins," he states it in a positive way later on in this Gospel. In John 11:25 he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" So he says, "Everyone who believes in Me will be saved. Everyone who believes in Me will live eternally even if he dies physically." So there is this gracious promise of Christ that he not only warns sinners about the consequences of rejecting him, he sets forth a stupendous promise of eternal life, of no threat of judgment, of no fear of condemnation for the one who believes in him. Sola Fide, as we looked at last week, to receive Christ for salvation and to rest in him alone knowing and understanding and believing and assenting to the Gospel with all of your heart, and entrusting yourself completely to Christ for salvation and entrusting him alone. Denying self, denying all claims to self-righteousness. Denying any works and saying, "Christ alone is my hope and if it were not for Christ, I would most certainly be judged and damned, and not only that, I would be most righteously judged and damned." That is the nature of understanding of true saving faith.

You know, it's one thing, as I've said in times gone by, it's one thing for a sinner to say, "I don't deserve to go to heaven," that's a true enough statement, none of us do, but the real litmus test of understanding, the real litmus test of true saving faith is whether the sinner will go the next step and say, "Not only do I not deserve to go to heaven, what I actually deserve is to go to hell for my sins, for my rebellion against God, for my indifference to his word." So beloved, it's fair enough for me to ask even in a setting of familiar faces like this, is that what you say, is that your self-assessment as you consider your own righteousness before a holy God because this is the difference between understanding

your need for a Savior and simply making a little qualified statement that seems to be modest, seems to be modest and humble to say, "Oh, I don't deserve to go to heaven," but the sparks can fly when you say, "Well then, are you saying then that you actually deserve to go to hell?" "Well, no, let's not go there! Let's not be radical. Let's not be fanatical about it. After all, I'm not so bad." And when people speak like that, they betray the pride and self-righteousness of their heart. The statement that, "I don't deserve to go to heaven," when you deny the other aspect of it, you refuse the other aspect of deserving to go to hell, all that does is it exposes what you really think.

So beloved, in this context of talking about Solus Christus, do you think you deserve to go to heaven on your own? I know you'd all say no, especially after what I just said, but it would do you good to look in the mirror and to reflect honestly on whether you've come to grips with what Scripture says, that your sin and guilt require eternal judgment apart from Christ. Is that what you believe and say about yourself because that's a whole different ballgame. That's where we get into saying, "Wow, I really do need a Savior."

We sang a song, I think it was in Michigan, we haven't sung it here. It was a new song to me, but part of the lyrics and I'm going to just have to summarize it, I hadn't planned to mention this, but one of the lyrics in talking about the denial of self-righteousness that's necessary and that is at the heart of true saving faith, one of the lyrics said this and it was stating it in kind of an awkward negative sort of way, but saying that, "It's not a list of sins that I have avoided that give me righteousness before You." In other words saying, and I relate to this very profoundly because it was at the core of my thinking before I was a Christian. There were a list of sins that I had not committed and I thought on that basis, although I wouldn't have had the brains or the spiritual insight to explain it this way, looking back on it, what was in my mind was the fact that I had avoided those sins meant that I was okay with God. Then when you break those lines and then all of a sudden your self-righteousness is punctured and you realize, "I really do need a Savior." I remember puncturing that self-righteousness with my conduct and my behavior and in shame I remember it, but I remember when the weight of that fell upon me, I was overwhelmed, the oxygen was sucked out of the room by the recognition, "I deserve to go to hell! I deserve judgment!" And I had nothing else. My balloon was popped and there was just, you know, ruptured pieces of self-righteousness that was never going to be put back together again.

Well, it's to people like that that Jesus comes and offers his blessed words of hope. "You can believe in Me even as a sinner like that, even someone who recognizes and feels the weight of sin. You can come to Me and believe and be saved." And there are no prior works that need to be done. You don't have to wait until you feel bad enough for your sin because you could never feel bad enough. You don't have to do prior works and try to clean up your life before you come to Christ. That's not the call of the Gospel at all. The call of the Gospel is, "You believe in Christ right now in free forgiveness. Free salvation is completely yours instantly and immediately and forever." That's why we say the Gospel is good news. You don't have to go to a priest and try to confess it all out. You don't have to go to Mary. You can go directly to Christ alone and find a willing Savior who's paid the full price and who, in his person, is more than capable of saving you just

as you are. So Jesus said, "Unless you believe I am He, you'll die in your sins. Everyone who believes in Me will live forever."

Look at John 14:6 and the point that we're making here in what we're saying is that Christ himself asserted his own exclusivity as the Savior of the world and you either believe Christ and take him at his word for him to save you, or if you don't want, if you don't like that exclusive message, if you'd rather live in the post-modern world that there is no absolute truth, I mean, beloved, when Christ speaks we are faced with the requirement to reject the spirit of our age in order to truly receive him. Jesus said in John 14:6, you know what it says, he said to Thomas, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." In Acts 4:12, "there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

So when we come to this doctrine of Solus Christus, we're faced, first of all, with the recognition that Christ asserted exclusivity and he will tolerate no other. You don't line Christ up besides Buddha and ten billion Hindu gods or however many they have, the false Christ of Jehovah's Witnesses, the false Christ of Mormonism. You don't line him up if he were in a police line-up and you try to choose out which one. There's only one. Man cannot save himself. Science and philosophy does not save anyone. Islam, Mormonism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Catholicism, the sexual revolution doesn't save anyone. Well, why is that? You know, we make these assertions, why is it, what is it about Christ that makes him so that he's the only Savior? Why is it Solus Christus, Christ alone? If we just simply said Christ without making the corresponding claim of exclusivity, a lot of people that otherwise hate us would get along with us just fine. If we would say that Christ is our Savior but, you know, you can have your god, then there would be no offense in the Gospel. The offense that Christ brings to every man everywhere is that Christ says, "You must leave your false religion behind. You must leave your self-righteousness behind and come to Me alone or you will die in your sins," and that's what people don't want to hear.

Why is it Solus Christus? Let's look at those two realities about Christ to see that salvation can only come through him. First of all, let's consider the person of Christ. The person of Christ. Part of the reason that Christ is exclusively the Savior is because there is no one like him. Christ alone is able to bridge the gap between man and God because Christ alone has the nature of God and the nature of man in one person. No one else is God Incarnate, Christ alone is.

In John 1:1, we're kind of staying in the Gospel of John for a little while anyway, in John 1:1 it says, "In the beginning was the Word," and the construction, the Greek construction there has the idea that in the beginning at the first moment of time, Christ was already existing. Christ was existing, time began, and Christ existed through that. He is pre-existent deity. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Verse 14, "And the Word became flesh," God became a man, "and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." The only one. There is no other. He is solitary. He is alone. He is exclusive as the God-man.

So when we consider these aspects of his deity and his humanity, I'm planning to speak on his humanity for a couple of weeks next month as the Christmas holiday approaches, in his deity, Christ reveals God to men. In his humanity, he is able to represent man to God. He brings God to man and he is able to bring man to God because both natures reside in his single person. So expanding that out and the theological implications of that for how it relates to our salvation, his deity provides an infinite value to his merit, an infinite value to his righteousness. He's not simply righteous in himself, his person brings an infinite value to his merit which means that everyone who believes in him can partake of it and it is not exhausted. His humanity – oh, this is so sweet, this is so sweet – his humanity identifies him completely with us with the exception of sin. So his very nature, his very person, is unique. There is no one else in the visible or invisible realm like Jesus. He is God in human flesh and no one else is, and if the gap between God and man is going to be bridged, it has to be someone who shares both natures. God couldn't delegate an angel to save us because he wouldn't share in our humanity; he wouldn't share in the eternal essence of God. Couldn't be an animal, Scripture makes plain the blood of bulls and goats can't take away our sin because they don't share our nature; there's no infinite value to it either. Do you start to see how all of this fits together? Do you start to see the implications of theology of a right view of Christ?

Look at the book of Colossians 2:8, and looking down the road just a couple of weeks, we're going to start reading through Colossians in our Sunday worship. I'm looking forward to that. Colossians 2:8 where the Apostle Paul said, "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority." And what has Christ done? Verse 14, he's "canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." His cross work and the efficacy, the effectiveness, in other words of his cross work, is tied into the reality of who his person is. All the fullness of deity dwells in him in bodily form. Only Christ is fully God and fully man. He shares the essence of both God and man and that is why he is uniquely and alone and exclusively able to save, it's because he has within his person the nature of God and the nature of man which enables him to save guilty sinners like you. His person makes that possible and his person is unique. It cannot be duplicated. There is no one else like him.

So as we proclaim the full deity and the full humanity of Christ, we automatically exclude any other claimants to the role of Savior. Mary isn't God, even though they're trying to add her to the Godhead. Buddha. Mohammad. None of these people are God and they can't save and faith in them, faith in their teachings is misplaced; trying to cross the bridge from man to God on them, that bridge collapses the first moment a man tries to put his weight and trust in that bridge. It collapses underneath him. Trying to walk to God on your own self-righteousness, it's a bridge that collapses. It's toothpicks trying to uphold a runaway freight train. So the person of Christ alone is the strong and sturdy bridge that we need to bridge the gap between us and God, not only, beloved, not only the

gap that sin creates because that is fatal, that is lethal in and of itself, but also just to recognize the difference in essence, that as a man we cannot reach the essence of undiminished deity. We need deity to bring us to deity, so the person of Christ does just that.

As I've said so many times as we've gone through this series, what you should find welling up in your heart is a great reverence toward Christ growing ever deeper, broader and greater in your heart; to reverence him; to love him; to fear him; to submit to him; to own him; to gladly identify with him; to love him more than life itself. Christ spoke of that, didn't he? "When I am lifted up, I'll draw men to Myself." That's what we're trying to do here this evening. In the simplicity and inadequacy of our feeble human words, we're trying to lift up Christ. That's all we care about.

Now, secondly, let's consider the work of Christ and why his work means that only Christ could be the Savior. We are saved because of Christ alone because he alone has done what is necessary to save man from his sin. He alone has fulfilled what God requires and he has done what no one else could do. He is what no one else could be, he has done what no one else could do. Solus Christus, Christ alone. And his work is necessary because our sin incurs a debt to God that we cannot pay. We have an infinite debt and we are bankrupt and we cannot pay it on our own, and God requires payment and it requires a high price indeed.

Look at the book of Hebrews 9 with me, if you will. Hebrews 9:22, "according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." What's the price of sin? What does sin require as its payment? Blood. Righteous blood. Righteous infinite blood alone can wash away our sins and as a result of God's requirement for a blood sacrifice, a blood payment, that puts the cross of Jesus Christ at the center of everything about true Christianity. There is, beloved, there is no Christianity apart from the cross. You cannot take away the cross and try to keep the morality and say you've got Christian morality but to deny the substitutionary atonement of the cross. You take away the cross, you take away the penal substitution of Christ on the cross and you have thrust a dagger into the heart of Christianity. You have killed it when you remove the cross and the work of Christ on the cross from your message.

Look at verse 27 of Hebrews 9. Actually, go to verse 24 where it says, "Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Do you see the substitutionary nature? Do you see how he represents us? How he carries us, as it were, to God in his person and in his work? Apart from that there is no access to the Holy of Holies. Apart from that there is no access to heaven.

Verse 27, "inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him." Christ is coming back for those who have believed in him. The ones who will welcome his coming

are the ones who will have Sola Fide and Solus Christus, faith alone, in Christ alone. And it was his one-time sacrifice on the cross that bore our sins and paid the price that God requires.

Look at 1 Peter 1:18, and we'll look at a few passages here in 1 Peter. This work of Christ paying the debt through his shed blood on the cross. This work of Christ substituting on behalf of sinners who believe with him. This work of Christ paying and shedding the blood that alone can bring about the forgiveness of sin. 1 Peter 1:18, "you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." The lamb being the picture of that earlier sacrifice which pointed forward to Christ, an unblemished lamb in innocence; an unblemished lamb offered in substitute of the one who offered it; the blood of the lamb providing the meeting place where God could be met, providing the sacrifice that God accepted for fellowship with him; the blood of Christ providing the single solitary meeting place where sinners can find their way to God.

Look at chapter 2, verse 24 of 1 Peter, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed." Notice the emphasis, beloved, in verse 14, "He Himself." He and no other did this work. He alone bore our sins in his body on the cross. No one else.

As we said last year on our series on Roman Catholicism, it is blasphemy and it is a sin of highest order and magnitude for the Roman Catholic Church to pretend to re-offer Christ in their Mass time after time after time again, as if a little wafer could actually turn into Christ; as if literal wine could turn into literal human blood without changing its appearance. It's just superstition. But even beyond that, to say that we must re-offer Christ again and again and again in order to pay for sin, again, is to take a dagger to the real meaning of the cross where Scripture says repeatedly once for all he offered himself for our sins.

Chapter 3, verse 18 of 1 Peter, "Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God." Look at it again, look at the sweetness of those words and look at how the doctrine of Solus Christus just radiates out like the sun against a brilliant sky. "Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God."

So at the cross, Christ was acting as our substitute. He paid the price that God required and he paid it in blood like God required. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. Christ shed that blood and when we put our faith alone in him alone, the full merit of that blood is applied to our account, cleansing us, washing us, satisfying everything that God's justice requires against sin, all satisfied in that singular act on the cross when Christ offered himself up, the just for the unjust.

That would be magnificent enough, wouldn't it? But go just a little bit further and remember why he did it. Why he did it. For God so loved the world that whoever would

believe in him would not perish but have eternal life. Again you see the exclusivity of Christ in John 3:16, don't you? Whoever would believe in him would not perish. But why, why do we have a Savior? Why did Christ do this? Because it is his nature to love and to give of himself for his people. He gladly bore your sin on the cross. Galatians 2:20, "He loved me and gave Himself up for me." And not a love of feeling sentiment but a love of self-sacrifice where he laid down his life for you at the cross. In love, he received the wrath of God your sin required. In love, he had the Father pour out righteous anger on him so that it would not be poured out on you. In love, he cared for your soul enough to bear the price himself so that you could go free. In love, in love, in love, in love, in love, in love, he bore the taunts of sinful men against him. In love, he bore the crown of thorns. In love, he bore the nails. In love, he bore the wrath. In love, he prays and says, "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing." In the height of his agony, in love, he's praying for the very ones who crucified him.

What manner of love is this? What manner of God is this, that does this for his people? Look at all the gods that men have made up in Greek mythology and throughout the course of time and its gods demanding something from the people. In Christianity, you see God doing something for his people. In love, going to the cross, going to the crucifixion, going to the supreme instrument of torture and execution ever known to man; so severe, so harsh that Constantine outlawed it as a future means of punishment when he ascended to the throne. In love. Solus Christus. And when we think, beloved, about our response to him, where our highest affection is, we could say it in this way, what's the highest affection of your heart? "Solus Christus, who else? Christ alone. Who else died for my soul? Who else loved me like He did? Not the best spouse. Not the most loving child. Not a brother. Not a sister. No one loved me like that."

So beloved, only at the cross was the wrath of God poured out to satisfy the justice of God. There is no other place where that work could be done. It was once for all, therefore, it must be Solus Christus. And understand that his work of substitution is effective. It did the job because of his person. His humanity enabled him to offer innocent human blood for human sin. His deity provided an infinite merit that can save many, that can save any that come to him by faith. One writer puts it this way and I quote, "Christ died that he might bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. Christ died for us. He was delivered up for us. The sacrifice of Christ was a propitiating, justice-satisfying, wrath-quenching event. By his death, the justice of God was satisfied."

His person, his work, lead us to this conclusion of Solus Christus. Solus Christus means that Christ alone is the only mediator with God. In 1 Timothy 2, I'll just read it for the sake of time, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, "there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all." One mediator, the man Christ Jesus. Don't you see in the biblical arithmetic of this, the biblical numerology on this stops at one. When you count the number of ways to God, you only have to count to one. When you count the number of individuals who could actually save you from sin, you only have to count to one. Don't even try to count to two, that would deny the one.

As I said earlier, beloved, please hear this, write this down or remember it. Jesus Christ and him alone, Solus Christus means this: no one else is qualified because no one else has his person. No one else has done the work. There was one work sufficient at the cross. And beloved, here's the thing that I would have you see in addition to all of that, also see this: no one else ever could. No one else did. No one else will. No one else ever could because no one else will be the God-man. No one else will be God in human flesh. No one else will ever go to a cross like Jesus did. And the perfection of his person, the perfection of his righteousness, the perfection of his shed blood cannot be duplicated. It cannot be repeated. There is no one else. If this were the last message I ever preached, this would be a great note to go out on. I don't intend it to be, just to be clear, but if it were, we could just take the chariot and go straight to heaven on the truth that we're talking about here today.

So what are the implications of these great truths? I've been weaving this in and out throughout but let's just draw it to a close with this. Solus Christus means that we utterly, completely and defiantly reject the Catholic priesthood and their claims of the intercession of Mary as though we needed other mediators with God. The very existence of those doctrines and those men who try to serve in that capacity denies Solus Christus and is a blasphemy of the rankest, darkest order possible against our blessed Lord Jesus. Christ calls us to come through him alone and what kind of pride and arrogance when Christ speaks directly to the sinner through his word and says, "Come to Me and find rest," what kind of blasphemous, satanic, demonically controlled contrivance would seek to intervene and to put themselves in between the sinner and Christ? No way.

And how grateful we are for the memories of those men who stood and opposed it in the Reformation which we're doing this series to remember, the implications of Reformation doctrine. How grateful we are for John Knox and Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin and Martin Luther and Wycliffe, and great men like them who at great personal cost with far fewer shoulders to stand on than what we have today, took their stand on Sola Scriptura, proclaimed Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus, to the glory of God alone.

So Solus Christus means we reject that Catholic abomination. Solus Christus means that we reject the modern notion that all religions lead to God. We come Solus Christus. Solus Christus means that we are not saved by any righteousness of our own. Do you see that? Solus Christus doesn't simply rebuke and refute institutions and philosophies, the great power of this great doctrine rebukes our own soul and instructs us that we ourselves have no merit. We come through Christ alone. We don't come as equal partners in our salvation. We don't come with checked baggage that helps us get to the destination. We don't come with a carry-on. We come with nothing. We come to God Solus Christus and not of ourselves, not of our own righteousness, not in our own boasting. Solus Christus means that we look forward to eternity. We do not fear death. We have no fear of purgatory, there is no such thing. Sins are not paid for in purgatory, they are not burned off. Purgatory is a fiction. It is a contradiction of Solus Christus. The debt of sin was paid in full by Christ alone and, therefore, we come through Christ alone.

Solus Christus means that no one will go to heaven apart from Christ. Man, woman, boy and girl, you can only come to God through faith alone, in Christ alone, and Solus Christus reveals, as I've already said, the great love of God for sinners. Listen to this verse from 2 Thessalonians in chapter 2, verse 16, Paul says, "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word." Solus Christus tells us that our God has loved us and that our God does love us, that our God has taken care of our sin guilt and our sin condemnation, and all of that has been taken away so that we now have free bold and loving confident access into his presence through Christ alone. Well is it that Christians for a very long time have sung "Amazing love, how can it be, that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"

Father, we praise you for Christ alone. He alone is our righteousness. In Christ alone we find the righteousness which satisfies a holy God. In Christ alone we find the shed blood that paid the price of sin. In Christ alone we find our highest affections. In Christ alone we find our all in all. Father, may these things captivate our affections, may the exclusivity of Christ find its rightful place in the exclusive highest affections of the throne room of our heart. And Father, for those who are in the room apart from Christ, for those hearing this message on subsequent media apart from Christ, Father, I pray for a work of your Holy Spirit that would so work in their hearts and take away the heart of stone, the cold, lifeless heart through which they have viewed Christ and now, Father, in this moment, give them that heart of flesh to see the greatness of Christ, Father, and that they might flee to Christ knowing that he freely invites them, that they can freely come, that they can come now and believe in him and receive him, and that all of the infinite merit and all of the infinite benefits of Christ could be theirs by personal possession without delay. O, the greatness of the Gospel and the greatness of our Christ. O God, how we thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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