

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 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. 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.

Intro: What was the Protestant Reformation? A protest against the errors of the Roman Catholic Church

- Led by Martin Luther – a Roman Catholic German Monk (1483-1546); (Martin Luther King Jr. Story)
- Luther saw errors in the teaching and practice of the Roman Catholic Church so he wrote 95 debating points or theses and nailed them on the church door in Wittenburg, Germany, on October 31st, 1517.

Five major truths recovered through the Reformation: The Five Solas (Latin for “alone” or “only”) (**God alone!**)

1. Sola Scriptura (“Scripture alone”): Our final authority for the Christian faith and practice is God's Word alone.
2. Solus Christus (“Christ alone”): We are justified by Jesus Christ alone: He alone is our Lord, Savior, and King.
3. Sola Gratia (“grace alone”): We are justified by the grace of God alone: we cannot work for it or earn it.
4. Sola Fide (“faith alone”): We are justified through faith alone in Christ alone: we cannot add to what Christ did.
5. Soli Deo Gloria (“God’s glory alone”): These truths and our whole lives should be lived for God’s glory alone.

1. We Have A Big Problem

Ephesians 2:1-3: 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 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**.

a. We were dead in trespasses and sins: We were spiritually dead like the dry bones of Ezekiel 37! We had hearts of stone! We were dead like Lazarus in the tomb! We were absolutely incapable of taking the first step toward God

b. We walked in sin just like the world: 1 John 2:15-16: Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world - the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions - is not from the Father but is from the world.

c. We followed Satan: V. 2: the prince of the power [kingdom] of the air; **Ephesians 6:12:** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against **the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places**.

d. Satan worked in us: V. 2: the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience

e. We were disobedient: We were sons of disobedience!

f. We lived in the passions of our flesh in body and mind: Galatians 5:19-21: Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

g. We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind: We deserved and were under God's wrath!
GOSPEL!

2. Scripture Alone (Sola Scriptura)

Ephesians 2:1-10 is the Word of God! We know these truths about God through His Word!

Luther's debate with John Eck: 1519 in Leipzig; Eck said Luther sounded like the heretic Jan Huss, who was burned in 1415 at the Council of Constance; Luther denied this – I'm just saying what the Scriptures say; During a break in the debate, Luther went to the library at the university and looked up what Huss had taught; Luther came back and said, Yes! I am a Hussite! Because Jan Huss simply said what was written in the Scriptures!

Luther; Worms; 1521: Since then Your Majesty and your lordships desire a simple reply, I will answer without horns and without teeth. Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason – I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other – my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen.

Luther looking back: For the Word created heaven and earth and all things; the Word must do this thing, and not we poor sinners. In short, I will preach it, teach it, write it, but I will constrain no one by force, for faith must come freely without compulsion. Take myself as an example. I opposed indulgences and all the papists, but never with force. I simply taught, preached, and wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philip and Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything.

Luther: Christ is closer to you in His Word, than your little son with his arms around your neck.

Galatians 1:8-9: But **even if we** or **an angel from heaven** should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be **accursed** (eternally condemned).

Mark Dever: God's Word always comes first and creates God's people:

Genesis 1: God spoke the world into existence by His Word.

Genesis 3:1: He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

Noah: Genesis 6:22: Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

Abraham: Genesis 12:4: So Abram went, as the LORD had told him

Moses: Exodus 3 – the burning bush

Israel: Mount Sinai – the 10 Words; **Deuteronomy 5:32:** You shall be careful therefore to do as the LORD your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

Prophets: Continuously speak God's Word, calling God's people back to faith in God & faithfulness to His Word!

Jesus: John 1:14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us

Matthew 4:4: But he answered, "It is written, " "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (And He spoke like no man ever spoke – and we have His Words – Gospels!)

Apostles: 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work

Us: We are to be bereans; Psalm 119!

3. Christ Alone (Solus Christus)

Ephesians 2:4-7: 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**.

We've been made alive with Christ; raised with Christ; seated with Christ; and all of this is only possible in Christ!

Luther wanted to exalt Christ alone: The first thing I ask is that people should not make use of my name, & should not call themselves Lutherans, but Christians. What is Luther? The teaching is not mine. Nor was I crucified for anyone. St. Paul, in 1 Cor. 3, would not tolerate Christians calling themselves Paul's or Peter's, but only Christians. How did I, poor stinking bag of maggots that I am, come to the point where people call the children of Christ by my evil name? Not so, dear friends, let us do away with party names, & be called Christians, for it is his teaching that we have. The papists are rightly called by a party name as long as they are not satisfied with the doctrine & the name of Christ, & want to be papists as well; let them be papists; for the Pope is their master. I am no one's master, nor do I wish to be. I share with all men the one common teaching of Christ, **Who alone is our Master!**

1 Timothy 2:5: For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus
Acts 4:11-12: This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.
¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved; **John 14:6:** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." **Peter:** Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life! The Cross!!

4. Grace Alone (Sola Gratia)

Ephesians 2:8-9: 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.

What is grace?: Unmerited (unearned) favor; God's undeserved goodness, kindness, and love toward us; Not getting what we deserve; Getting what we don't deserve! God's Riches At Christ's Expense!

Trueman: God must do for us what we cannot do for ourselves! **Grace:** God taking action, motivated by love & shaped by holiness, which takes account of the seriousness of sin yet brings sinners back into communion with Him

One Pastor spoke about Luther's commitment to Grace Alone: At the heart of Martin Luther's theology was the conviction that human beings are totally dependent on **God's omnipotent grace** to rescue us from the bondage of the will by creating [and granting us the ability] to believe and obey God. Luther wrote a book, *The Bondage of the Will*, to answer a book called, *The Freedom of the Will*, written by Erasmus.

Luther knew that Erasmus, more than any other opponent, had put his finger on the deeper issue at stake beneath the justification controversy and the controversy over the mass and indulgences and Mary and purgatory. And that issue was whether human beings are so sinful that **God's sovereign grace** must [create and grant us the ability] to believe and obey God.

Luther: I praise and commend you highly for this also, that unlike all the rest you alone have attacked the real issue, the essence of the matter in dispute, and have not wearied me with irrelevancies about the papacy, purgatory, indulgences, and such like trifles

Romans 11:6: But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

5. Faith Alone (Sola Fide)

Ephesians 2:8-9: 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.

WSC: Q: What is justification? **A:** Justification is an act of God's free grace, in which He forgives all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Roman Catholic Catechism: Justification is conferred in Baptism . . . It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. (Justification is a process)

Council of Trent (1545-1563): If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified . . . let him be anathema.

R. Catholics believe in justification by grace through faith in Christ according to the Bible for the glory of God.

Faith + Works = Justification; Grace + Merit = Justification; Christ + Me (my righteousness) = Justification;
The Bible + Popes, Counsels, and Tradition = Our Final Authority; God's Glory + Man's Glory = Outcome

Alister McGrath: 3 Main features of the Lutheran and Protestant doctrine of Justification:

- 1) Justification is a legal declaration that changes your status before God, not a transformation or a change of your nature.
- 2) Justification is clearly distinguished from sanctification: declaration vs. change of heart and behavior; final, one-time act vs. a life-long process; by faith alone vs. by faith and our own effort – by grace – through the Spirit!
- 3) We are justified because of Christ righteousness imputed or counted to us and the forgiveness of our sins. Sanctification, not justification, is our own growth in righteousness

Timothy George: 3 Elements in Martin Luther's Theology of Justification:

- 1) Imputation: Righteousness is imputed to us instead of imparted – it's an alien righteousness – the righteousness of Christ!

- **Philippians 3:8-9:** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith

- **Luther:** Through faith in Christ, therefore, Christ's righteousness becomes our righteousness and all that he has becomes ours.

- 2) Believers are justified and at the same time sinners: **Romans 4:5:** And to the one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness

- 3) Faith alone justifies: **Galatians 3:10-11:** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." ¹¹ Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith."

6. God's Glory Alone (Soli Deo Gloria)

Ephesians 2:8-10: 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.

There is no place for boasting: only God deserves and should get and will get all the glory, honor, and praise!

What is God's Glory?

a. Significance or Importance: Kabod – weightiness; Like a judge in a courtroom – the Honorable!

b. Light (Purity, Holiness): **Isaiah 60:1-2:** Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

c. The glory of God: Piper: The glory of God is the holiness of God put on display. That is, it is the infinite worth of God made manifest (going public). When the holiness of God fills the earth for people to see, it is called glory. The basic meaning of holy is "separated from the common." Thus, the holiness of God is His infinite "separation" from all that is common [**invisible**]. [His holiness] is what makes Him the infinite "one of a kind" [**only God**] – God's glory is the radiance of His holiness, the out-streaming of His infinite value.

So, we may define God's glory as the beauty and greatness of His [many] perfections.

Leigh: The infinite excellency of the Divine essence

Who is the glory? Jesus! Hebrews 1:3: He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature

God does not share His glory, and He does all He does ultimately for His own glory: Isaiah 48:11: For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

Ephesians 1:5-6, 12, 13-14: he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ **to the praise of his glorious grace** . . . ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory** . . . ¹³ [you] were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory**.

We should live for God's glory: **V. 10:** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

The only way we can rightly live for God's glory is by first being justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Bible alone, all for the glory of God alone! And remember this and live in light of it!

King Jesus Is Our All Alone
Sola Gratia Makes Flesh From Stone
Christ Died For Sinners To Atonement
Rose Death's Reign To Crush Dethrone
We're Justified By Faith Alone
Only In God's Bible Known
Adopted We Are Made His Own
Trust And Obey Our Faith Is Grown
See Christ's Beauty Minds Are Blown
Soli Deo Gloria Shown
All For His Glory Christ Alone!