

The Five 'Solas' of the Reformation

Introduction

(1) Scripture Alone – The Bible alone is our highest authority

'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness' (2 Tim 3:16)

'No prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.' (2 Peter 1:20-21)

"I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, since it is neither right nor safe to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen." (Luther at Diet of Worms, 1521)

(2) Christ Alone – Christ is the only mediator between God and man

'Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me."' (John 14:6)

'For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men.' (1 Tim 2:5-6)

(3) Grace Alone – God's grace is the only basis for our salvation

'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came through Jesus Christ.' (Romans 3:23-24)

But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. (Titus 3:4-5)

"I was a good monk and kept my order so strictly that I could say that if ever a monk could get to heaven through monastic discipline, I should have entered in ... And yet my conscience would not give me certainty, but I always doubted and said, 'You didn't do that right. You weren't contrite enough. You left that out of your confession.'" (Martin Luther)

(4) Faith Alone – We are justified by faith in Jesus alone

'This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.' (Romans 3:22)

'For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.' (Romans 3:28)

'We are justified by faith alone, but the faith that justifies is never alone.' (John Calvin)

'The gospel is good, merry, glad and joyful tidings, that maketh a man's heart glad and maketh him sing, dance, and leap for joy' (William Tyndale)

(5) God's Glory Alone – the praise for our salvation goes to God alone

'Where then is boasting? It is excluded.' (Romans 3:27a)

'So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.' (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Conclusion