

- **The most important question anyone can ever ask is this:** “How can sinners be made right with God?”
- **And for the answer we have to look to Scripture ALONE**—the first pillar of these Five Solas. It doesn’t matter what churches, councils, or popes have to say in the end; it matters what God says.
- **Archbishop in the Tower of London, speaking to an imprisoned Protestant:** “You ground your faith upon such authors as say & unsay, both with a breath, and not upon the church, to whom you ought to give credit.”
Protestant: “No, I ground my faith upon God’s word, and not upon the church; for if the church be a good church, the faith of the church must be tried by God’s word, and not God’s word by the church.”
- **Who was this Protestant Reformer?** who fired back at the Catholic Archbishop with a fierce devotion to the Scriptures alone? 17 year old Lady Jane Grey. 1553.
- **And what do the Scriptures teach?** That we are saved by GRACE ALONE through FAITH ALONE in JESUS ALONE. Sola Gratia is the 10,000 foot view of our being made right with God—we are made right with God ultimately because He chose us before the foundation of the world, he predestined us for adoption as sons, according to His will (Ephesians 1:3-4). And Sola Fide—Faith alone—is the ground level view of how we are made right with God. It concerns us in real time, not before the world existed, by right here and right now. And it primarily deals with this question:

1. HOW CAN ANYONE BE RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD? *JUSTIFICATION

- **This is a question I want you to ask yourself right now: Q.** How can I stand before God one day at the end of my life, when He judges us all individually, and know that He will say, “Righteous; Justified.”? **ROMANS 1!**
- **These two verses are directly following Paul’s introduction** to the his entire letter to the church at Rome. And in these, he presents to us the basic nature of the gospel. We are made right before God—JUSTIFIED—saved—by the gospel of Jesus, through faith. *Read it with me!*

ROMANS 1:16 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

- **So, Paul says, it is through faith in the gospel—faith in Jesus and what He’s done—that we are saved.** It is through faith that we are righteous before God.
- **The Roman Catholic Church both in the 16th century and today would agree in part.** But they would add to it—clarifying what they mean and how in fact we will be righteous before God. Yes faith is necessary for our justification before God, but it is not sufficient... Rome believed (and believes still!) that through baptism we are INFUSED with grace and are in a state of grace before God. However, there certain mortal sins you can do that will bring you OUT of the state of grace. And there are certain sacraments to deal with these. There are also venial sins (not so serious) that can bring you out of a state of grace, and there are sacraments to deal with these as well. If you die, having committed a MORTAL sin, you go to hell. If you die having committed a VENIAL sin, you go to Purgatory in order to be purged from your sin before standing before God. For the Roman Catholic Church the way we can be justified is ultimately according to what we do/don’t do. Do you see why Rome would not say with us, “We are justified through faith ALONE”?
- **In stark contrast, the Reformers, as they looked to the Scriptures ALONE...** realized that we have no hope to be able to live such a life to be able to stand before God and having a righteousness of our own and Him say, “Righteous; justified!”
- **The Reformers saw, in the Scriptures, the power that sin wields over us:**
- **James 1:5** “Desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is full grown brings forth death.”
- **Romans 3:23:** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
- **Exodus 34:7:** “God will by no means clear the guilty.”
- **Isaiah 64:6:** “We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”

- **Martin Luther:** “If anyone would feel the greatness of sin he would not be able to go on living another moment; so great is the power of sin.”
- **The Reformers also saw, in their own lives, the hopelessness they had to achieve righteousness:**
- **Luther once wrote,** “If ever a monk could be [justified] by his monkery, I was the monk.”
- **MARTIN LUTHER:** “Though I lived as a monk without reproach, I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience. I could not believe that he was placated by my satisfaction.”
- **Rom. 7:** “I do what I don’t want to do and I don’t do what I want—who will save me from this body of death?”
- **THEREFORE, UNDER THIS FALSE DOCTRINE THAT WE ARE SAVED THROUGH FAITH + WORKS TO ESTABLISH OUR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, LUTHER WAS AN ABSOLUTE MESS:** “I did not love, yes, I hated the righteous God who punishes sinners, and secretly, if not blasphemously, certainly murmuring greatly, I was angry with God, and said, “As if, indeed, it is not enough, that miserable sinners, eternally lost through original sin, are crushed by every kind of calamity by the law of the decalogue...Thus I raged with a fierce and troubled conscience. Nevertheless, I beat importunately upon Paul at that place, most ardently desiring to know what St. Paul wanted.”
- **Finally, the Reformers saw, in the Scriptures, the very opposite of what Rome taught:**
- **Romans 3:20:** “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight.”
- **Galatians 2:16:** “we know that a person is not justified by works of the law...because by works of the law no one will be justified.”
- **Q. So how on earth, if we can’t achieve a righteousness in ourselves through our works, could God ever look at us and say, “Righteous; Justified!”**

2. GOD DECLARES US RIGHTEOUS BY FAITH ALONE

ROMANS 1:17 17 For in it (the gospel!) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

- **Paul is saying that because of what Jesus has done in His *PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS* life, death, and resurrection (the gospel), we, through faith in Him, are then given a righteousness that is not our own. We are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus who worked perfectly in our place.**
- **O what good news!** It’s not US who achieves the righteousness before God; rather it is God who *counts* us righteous through faith in Jesus. ****IMPUTED vs. INFUSED****
- **When Luther finally grasped this, He was studying these very two verses in Rom. 1. And he then wrote,** “Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates.”
- **And the Reformer also *RE*discovered that Paul connected this throughout the entire Bible! All the way back even to Abraham. That’s why Paul writes this in Romans 4:** “3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. 5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness. . . 22 That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” 23 But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, 25 who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” **(Romans 4:3-4, 22-25)**
- **Do you see what this means? Because of what Jesus has done in our place, we can be counted righteous before God RIGHT NOW through faith in Jesus. Through confidence in Him and His work, not ours!**
- **Q. What then becomes of our good works?** How do the good works we’re commanded to do fit in all this?
- **EPHESIANS 2:8-10** 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.
- **Archbishop:** “Why, then it is necessary unto salvation to do good works also; it is not sufficient only to believe.” **Jane Grey:** “I deny that, and I affirm that faith only saveth; but it is meet for a Christian to do good works, in token that he follows the steps of his Master, Christ; yet we may not say that they profit to our salvation; for when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants, and faith only in Christ saves us.”

3. THE ASSURANCE JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH BRINGS

- **Q.** Do you want to be able to face every day of your life without cowering back in fear?!
- **THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH ALONE IS FOR YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE:**
- **If your faith is in Jesus, you can face each day with an unwavering confidence that God is FOR YOU.** Through faith in Jesus God has ALREADY DECLARED YOU JUSTIFIED. Jesus has already lived perfectly to count you righteous, already died in your place to take away your unrighteousness, already got out of the grave sealing the deal and promising our hearts it's all true!
- **This is the greatest truth of the gospel for your everyday life, and frankly the hardest to live in light of.** Why? Because we still fail and do unrighteous things. We need to remember: *Simul justus et peccator.*
- **You can say with Paul,** "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
- **You're going to die. Q.** Do you want to be able to face that thought with confidence and joy?!
- **THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH ALONE IS ALSO FOR YOUR DEATH:**
- **If your faith is in Jesus, you don't have to fear death; you don't have to wonder what the verdict will be when you stand before God to be judged. You will be judged according to Jesus' works, thank God!**
- Towards the end of the Apostle Paul's life, he writes this to the Church at Philippi!
- **That's why Paul writes to the the Church at Philippi in Philippians 2:8-9,** "8 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."
- **LADY JANE GREY, to her sister Catherine, just before she died:** "I have here sent you, Good sister Catherine, a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is worth more than precious stones. It is the book, dear sister, of the law of the Lord... Rejoice in Christ, as I do. Follow the steps of your master Christ, and take up your cross. Lay your sins on his back, and always embrace him. And as touching my death, rejoice as I do, good sister, that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption. For I am assured, that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win an immortal life."