

## **SOLA GRATIA – GRACE ALONE**

- The “five solas” explain the solution to the fundamental problem of human kind: we are under the wrath of God and we are spiritually dead in our sins. Our being made spiritually alive, and God’s become 100% for us in Christ, is...
  - By God’s **grace alone**
  - On the basis of **Christ alone**
  - Received through **faith alone**
  - So that all things lead ultimately to **the glory of God alone**,
  - With **Scripture alone** as the only final authority teaching these truths.
    - “Look at the Book”, John Piper
  
- **Definitions – What does ‘Grace Alone’ mean?**
  - Salvation, **from beginning to end**, is the sovereign gift of God to the unworthy and undeserving. This doctrine means that nothing the sinner does commends him to the grace of God, and that the sinner does not cooperate with God in order to merit his salvation. - Tabletalk Magazine,  
Fall 2014, Ligonier Ministries
  
  - Key Texts:
    - **Romans 3:23–25:** “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.
  
    - **Romans 11:5–6:** “So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.”

- **Ephesians 2:4–10:** *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ — by grace you have been saved — and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*
- **1 Corinthians 15:10:** *“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.”*
- **Does the Roman Catholic church teach that we are saved by grace? Yes!!**
  - Contrary to popular belief. Roman Catholic theology does not teach that we are saved by works.
  - The issue is not salvation by grace – it’s salvation by grace ALONE.
    - *From the 16<sup>th</sup> Century to today, the Roman Catholic Church has said that justification requires faith, the grace of God, and the work of Christ. The debate arose because Protestants said justification requires faith ALONE, whereas Rome said justification requires faith plus works, grace plus merit, and Christ plus inherent righteousness.*  
*‘Are we together?’ - R.C Sproul*

- **You say tomato, I say tomatoe – What does ‘Justification’ mean?**
  - ‘To declare righteous’ vs. ‘to make righteous’.
    - *Romans 8:30 [30] And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. (ESV)*
    - *Romans 5:1 [1] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)*
  - To the Protestant, justification is a “once and for all” action. God declares the sinner just. Not only that, the righteousness of Christ is ‘imputed’ to us.
  - The Roman Catholic Church teaches that justification is not imputed to us, but rather, ‘imparted’ or ‘infused’ to us. In other words, we are handed something that we must properly take care of, and we must take great care not to lose it!
    - *Canon 9: If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate in order to obtain the grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary that he be prepared and disposed by the action of his own will, let him be anathema.*
    - *Canon 30: If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, **that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged** either in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema.*
  - The entire theological framework consists on a view of sin that teaches that there are two types of sin: **venial sins** and **mortal sins** – and both types, but in different ways, affect your justification before God, because Justification and Sanctification are interwoven.

- Bottomline – whatever type of sin you commit, there's still payment to be made! (temporal punishments)
- **The Solution: More Grace is need – The Sacraments.**
  - *Baptism*
    - *Justification is conferred in Baptism, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its purpose is the glory of God, and the gift of eternal life. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1995 – section 1992)*
  - *Confession*
  - *Holy Eucharist*
  - *Confirmation*
  - *Holy Orders*
  - *Matrimony*
  - *Extreme Unction*
- **Key Differences:**
  - **Protestant:** God, moved by grace, declares a sinner just, and imputes his righteousness on the sinner through the means of faith.
  - **Roman Catholic View:** God, moved by grace, declares a sinner just and infuses his righteousness on the sinner through the means of baptism.
  
  - **Protestant:** The grace of God has justified the sinner permanently.
  - **Roman Catholic:** The grace of God has justified the sinner initially.
  
  - **Protestant:** Our works are the product of our faith and the saving grace of God in our lives.
  - **Roman Catholic:** Our works are the necessary companion to our faith to merit and preserve the saving grace of God in our lives.
  
  - **Protestant:** Once received, the saving grace of God is permanent.
  - **Roman Catholic:** The saving grace of God can be received, lost, and regained.