

The Five Solas for Our Transformation

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to Romans chapter 1. Romans 1, I'll be reading from the ESV.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh, and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all nations, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor Mark. What a joy to be with you this morning. I'm Mark Hatfield. If we have not met, I hope I get to meet you.

I was delighted to meet Colin Horn this morning after hearing such gratitude by Brother John about this man who was half his age and with twice the energy, as I said earlier in Sunday school.

[1 : 54] And so, Brother, great to meet you. And what just a joy that God has given you all another under-shepherd. Greetings from Ebenezer and Michelle Kimati in Isiola, Kenya, as well as our church in Taylor, South Carolina, Grace Baptist Church in the upstate of South Carolina.

I want to express our gratitude to Pastor John. It's been... Cheryl and I got arrived here at his home on Thursday. It's a much-needed respite.

And I'm thinking I'm going to have to diet when I get back to Greenville. He's fed us so well. But the fellowship has been wonderful. Cheryl and I have enjoyed with him.

Thank you, ladies, for receiving Cheryl's ministry in the honor of being able to speak to you on the three T's under this theme of blooming where you're planted.

And husbands, if you weren't aware, it was from Psalm 37, Trust in the Lord. And then Ecclesiastes 9, the idea of stewarding time.

[3 : 10] And then finally from, I think, Psalm 92 and Colossians 3, this idea of thankfulness. Trust, time, thankfulness.

Also, if you weren't aware that in 2013, Cheryl and I, when we arrived at Beijing Baptist Church, we were greeted by Mark and Diane Kozlicki, some of your newer members.

And if you haven't got to know them, I encourage you to get to know them. They were great friends to us, even though we only shared, I think, about, felt like seven or eight months or something like that in China.

But have stayed friends and connected over many, many years. Well, this morning, unlike tonight, which will be an exposition of Matthew 28, 16 through 20, this morning is really a Reformation Sunday message.

And so, please do not, we're going to be referring to a number of passages, but I'm so glad that Brother Stan read for us that opening prologue to Paul's really magnum opus, his message, his letter there to the church at Rome.

[4 : 28] And my message this morning is entitled, The Five Solas for Our Transformation. And it's important that you get, you know that I use the word transformation and not reformation.

Let me describe for a moment as we think about the difference between reformation and transformation, that you might have a team that is not used to winning.

And you think we're going to reform a bit of the culture of this team or what we're doing. And so, you think we're going, let's, for the moment, if I can use football, forgive the sports analogy, I promise to make it brief to illustrate what we're doing.

So, hang with me if you're like, I don't care about football. Try to care for just a moment. Okay. All right. Maybe someone else will. Imagine that you think we need to switch the running back and the quarterback so that now the running back becomes the quarterback and we've moved the quarterback to the running back position.

And we need to change the numbers up on the uniforms. And in fact, our home uniforms and, I don't know, what are the colors for the Bremen Lions? Green and white.

[5 : 48] Okay. And let's say historically at home, and congrats on their victory, by the way, Friday night. We know they won big. Instead of green jerseys and white pants, we decide we need to have a switch up in our uniforms and go white tops and green pants.

And instead of having our pregame meal on Fridays before a game at noon, we're going to have a big breakfast.

Okay. And we could list any number of changes to the team and try to get a spark going in case they're not doing very well.

But that's very different than transforming a team that's not used to winning, that doesn't have a culture really of winning and successful performance on the field to transforming a group, if you will, of losers to a bunch of winners.

And so today, as we think on this Reformation Sunday, I know some might want to have counted last Sunday, the 27th, but I think it's fair today. November 3rd is our Reformation Sunday that we also acknowledged this last Thursday.

[7 : 08] And kids, in case some of you, you're not really particularly thinking about this, that it was 507 years ago, this Thursday, October 31st, 1517, that a German monk named Martin Luther nailed, imagine that, his 95 theses to the church door.

You might say these propositions to the church door at Wittenberg. And it was a moment barely noticed at the time, but the implications for the church that still bear great weight for us today changed the course of the world by the recovery of the transforming, not just reforming, but the transforming power of the gospel.

And in fact, if you look in Romans 1, it's Paul there that says, in Romans 1, verse 15, he says, for I am not ashamed of the power of the gospel.

And he tells why. It is, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

And he goes on to add, as he quotes from Habakkuk 2.4, he says, for in it, that is in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith.

[8 : 49] And so in the Protestant Reformation, which is really then, was really the match that led a transformation, that transformed the accepted thinking at that time, about the very nature of salvation.

And kids, let me, if you're a child, a boy or a girl, just for a moment, I want to get your attention. I want your eyes. The single most important question you will ever ask, the single most important question for which you need the answer, is how can I be at peace with God?

How may I know God? Not just about God, but know Him as the creator of the world who's made a way for you and I to be right with Him, even though we have been, by our sin, His enemy.

And so in the Protestant Reformation slash transformation, there was this transformation of the accepted thinking at that time about the very nature of salvation.

How a man or woman and even little children like some of you who are still marking how tall you are by lines on the doorframe, some of you have that.

[10 : 24] Anyone have that in your house? Hey, yeah, okay. All right, you're still growing. And so the Protestant Reformation was a transformation of our thinking.

It was a recovery of the way that a man or woman or boy or girl could be right with God. And salvation and forgiveness could not be obtained through the purchase of indulgences.

In fact, that was an affront to God and to the gospel. Now, we speak of five solas, the five solas for our transformation.

What's this word sola? It simply means alone in Latin. And Latin was part of the lingua franca of the day five centuries ago. And out of the Reformation were five solas.

Five, you might say, truth realities that rediscovered, kind of dusted off and found, aha, in a moment of epiphany, the truth realities from the pages of Scripture that were the legacy of that period.

[11 : 41] They were the seeds of a holy new era of the church. And they served as the pillars of the church catching fire as it rediscovered the very nature of the way God saved.

Some of you know Jonah 2.9. It's a very simple declaration. What? Salvation is from the Lord. Okay?

And kids, this is so important. There's a lot of things you can do. In fact, we live in a world where people want to say, if you can think it, you can be it.

Well, actually, no. I don't think I could be an NBA center. I'm only 5'9". Alright? I really don't think I could do that. Alright? But there's something you can't do that only God can do.

And that's to save you. And that's to take out a stony heart in you that you were born with and give you a new heart.

[12 : 42] A heart that's living and breathing and pulsing with love and desire for God in a way that you never had before.

We're going to look at that even in these five solas. We're speaking not about reformation, switching colors on a uniform or numbers or position, but actual transformation.

Now, I don't want us to sweat the order of the five solas. Some of you might think there's a classic order. I realized when I did a little research that these five solas are thought of in different orders. So, for the moment, just allow me to propose an order for our time as we acknowledge that there's great variance in the way they're given. Alright? In the writings and sermons and posters of that period.

But what's important is that we see the significance and the interrelatedness of them all. In fact, I want to give you an assignment I think it would be very interesting.

[13 : 45] For the month, for the remaining 27 days of November, try this out. Be clear about the five solas, okay? Sola gratia, grace alone.

Solus Christus, Christ alone. Sola fide, faith alone. Sola Deo Gloria, to the glory of God alone. And then, sola scriptura, scripture alone.

And as you are reading the Bible, you're reading in a text, look for notes. You know like when you buy a coffee, sometimes it says notes of raspberry and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

You know, all that type thing. Look for the notes of the five solas of the transformation. Look for grace. Look for Christ.

Look for faith. Look for elements of God's glory. Look for an emphasis on the authority and the sufficiency of scripture.

[14 : 45] So let's come first to sola gratia. I want to begin here. I was very tempted yesterday to flip this because we're going to do grace, Christ, faith, glory in scripture in that order.

And I thought, maybe I should flip them. And I thought, well, let's stay. But don't, if you think that that's inappropriate that I've got the order all wrong, will you forgive me for that and try to hear the rest of the message?

Okay. Let's move on. By grace alone. It's not, not really the message of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The kindness of God as God appears.

And He's introduced to us as the speaking creating God. Who creates spheres and then He fills them.

Who, though every day is pronounced and punctuated with, and God saw that it was good. That when there was that one day, even after the pronouncement that it was all very good, when God saw that it was not good that the man should be alone, that instead of stopping there, we're told that He said, I'll make a helper suitable for Him.

[16 : 24] That when Adam and Eve sinned and rebelled, He clothed them with animal skins. That embedded even in the curses in Genesis 3, there's that proto-evangelium in Genesis 3.15, that though the serpent would crush the heel of the seed of the woman, and the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head.

Even all the way to the end of the book of Revelation, I've thought over the last three weeks, I got hurt. I was playing around with the granddaughters three weeks ago and I got hurt.

Some of you may have prayed for me. Been in a lot of pain. And I've been very much living in 2 Corinthians 4 with this outer man wasting the inner being renewed day by day.

in recognizing that reading in the book of Revelation that there will be a day when there's no more crying nor death nor pain. God's grace is there in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

It's the source of all life and all good. And that's what we mean by grace alone. Notice how prominent it is in Paul's writings.

[17 : 47] writings in the passages that brother Stan read for us earlier. In fact, that's a great theme in the Apostle Paul's writings.

Why shouldn't it have been? Think about this just for a moment. The man described as watching, taking care of the coats of those who stoned the church's first martyr Stephen in Acts 7.

the one in Acts 8 who was described as breathing threats against the church.

In fact, it says in Acts 9 that Paul was breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.

It was this Saul that God then broke in upon and rescued in an incredible moment on the road to Damascus. Is it any wonder that Paul would say that grace would be a theme of his writings and so it's the first of our five solas for our transformation?

[18 : 59] Paul says it was through Jesus Christ in Romans 1 5. He says, through Jesus Christ, he and his fellow apostles received grace and apostleship.

Kids, just for a moment, you never earn grace. You may earn by something in school a grade, an A versus a B. You never earn grace.

Alright? The nature of grace, what grace is, is that you can't do anything to receive it. God gives it out of the very nature and character of his heart.

For John says, God is love. Maybe some of you have learned grace as this acronym. God's, what? Riches at Christ's, what?

Expense. God's riches at Christ's expense. It's free. You cannot pay for it.

[20 : 06] That's why the invitation and the prophet come by bread and milk without price. You cannot pay for it.

It's undeserved. You cannot earn it. You cannot turn a time sheet into God and say, God, you owe me grace. You cannot merit it.

And therefore, because you cannot pay for it, you cannot earn it, you cannot merit it. It is utterly secure for you, you see.

You cannot lose it. And it's this grace of God that it's the very heart of God in His plan and purpose to save a multitude from the nations of the world.

When you see, for example, when you read through the book of Acts and you see in Acts 1, chapter 1 through 8, Jerusalem, then 9 through 12, Judea and Samaria, and then from chapter 13 to the end, 28, through all of Paul's missionary journeys, and you see that expansion from the dot that's Jerusalem expanding Judea and Samaria to the whole of the globe, that's the story, the picture of God's unfolding gift of grace.

[21 : 36] And why is this? Because as we read in Habakkuk 2.14, we read this, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

And why grace? So that God and His glory will be known as fully and as broadly in the earth in the same way that the waters cover the sea.

Now who knows how much of the world or the globe is covered by water? Does anyone know roughly? Yeah, it's about three quarters.

Three quarters of the globe of the world is covered by oceans and seas and water. And there was this promise in the day of Habakkuk that to the extent that the waters covered the sea, so the earth would be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

And that accomplishment is by grace alone. And I want to press this in just for a little bit more. Some of us are well inclined to argue and present our credentials at every turn, to defend ourselves and to assert our worthiness for what we've received and the unfairness for what we haven't.

[23 : 11] grace. The lesson of sola gratia is that everything north of death and hell and desertion is grace.

to be honest, I'm hurting today. I'm going to be honest, physically I'm hurting. I haven't slept well in a couple of weeks with this soft tissue injury on my right side, on my upper thigh.

But you know, I've got a wife to take care of me. I have medicine. I have a comfortable bed. I have shoes to walk around.

The doctor said I need to walk. I have passages like 2 Corinthians 4 that reminded me this is predictable. The outer man is renewing, is wasting away.

But mark your inner man's renewing day by day. I have friends in Bremen, Indiana who knew about this, who's prayed for me. I'm getting texts of friends saying how are you doing? And I want to say like my dad used to say the end of his time with Parkinson's, okay for me, but you wouldn't like it. [24 : 16] Okay? That's how it was, alright? It's a relative. But it's all of grace. Sola gratia. Let's move to the second of the five solas for our transformation.

Solas Christus. Or by Christ alone. We know that Keith and Kristen Getty song. In Christ alone. I hope occasionally do you sing that here.

I hope. Great. Alright. Look with me for a moment. Turn back to Romans 1. We like to do this in Greenville. Page 939 on your ESV Bible in the seat in front of you.

Alright. And if you've never seen this in Paul's prologue, I want you to see the predominance of our Lord Jesus, of Christ Jesus.

Paul says he's a servant of Christ Jesus, verse 1. Number 2, this gospel, or in verse 3, is concerning his son. Verse 4, was declared to be the son of God in power.

[25 : 27] Continuing in verse 4, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, that through whom, that's Jesus, verse 5. For the sake of his name, that's the name of Jesus, verse 5.

Those of you who are called to belong to Christ Jesus, that is, in verse 6, that's the seventh reference. And then finally, at the end of verse 7, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In seven references, it's just saturated with Christ. And so, as we think of the five solas of the Reformation that are for our transformation, not only do we have sola gratia, but we have solus Christus.

In this text, this introduction by Paul is just brimful and overflowing with Jesus. If salvation is by grace alone, then it is on the basis of Christ alone, on the basis of His perfect life lived, His atoning death, His all-sufficient sacrifice on behalf of us, His people who are His sheep.

And there is no other name. There is no other Savior. If God's grace alone is the source of all life and all good, then that grace is founded, it's embedded in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great prophet and priest and king of the church.

[27 : 23] He is alone. He is the lone redeemer necessary, the lone redeemer given, the lone offering accepted that we might be made acceptable to God.

It was John Murray in his book Redemption Accomplished and Applied that said what was unique about the redemption that is ours in Christ Jesus, that unlike in the sacrificial system where the priest would offer something other than himself, in the offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, the offerer became the offering.

They melded together. And through him is our redemption. Through him is our justification. Through him is our sanctification. Through him is our transformation. Through him is our glorification. There is no one else.

Solus Christus is the clarion bell that came out of the Reformation. And Jesus stated it this way. Children, I think many of you know this.

[28 : 41] John 14 6. One of the seven I am sayings of our Lord Jesus that John captures. He says, I am the way. He doesn't say, I am a way.

He says, I am the life, not a life. He says, I am the and the truth. He says, I am the way, not a way. I am the truth and the truth, not a truth, and the life, not a life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Some of you know when you are driving with mom and dad, sometimes you're looking at GPS and it shows multiple ways you can get from point A to B. And this one's 21 minutes.

And this one says 23 minutes. And of course, you want to take the 21 minutes. And you realize it in travel that there are many ways to get from one destination to another.

[29 : 40] But solus Christus reminds us, even as reflected in the words of our Lord Jesus, that there is no other way. There is no other stream.

Peter was asked by the religious leaders in Jerusalem. By what power or by what name did you do this? They were referring to the healing of the lame beggar in Acts chapter 3.

But Peter preached the one way. He preached the exclusivity of Jesus or Christ alone. And he said this, 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.

And Paul advances this theme of Christ alone when he wrote to the church in 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 21, well known to you for our sake.

He made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we, we, you and I might become the righteousness of God.

[31 : 03] Sola gratia, solus Christus. Let's move on to sola fide. By grace alone, and on account of the person and work of Christ is a person saved.

But now we come to the subject of faith. And this is very important because I think sometimes we've confused faith.

When we say that we're saved by faith, we've not understood that faith is the instrument of salvation but not the source.

That grace is the fountainhead. Grace is the wellspring. Faith is the hose through which life-giving grace is delivered.

As someone preached in a sermon, faith is nothing in a sense if you understand what's meant by that. Faith is God's gift in the first place.

[32 : 03] Faith is the only pipe through which the life-giving water of grace travels to us. So we may say we are saved by faith, that is the instrument of faith, through grace in Christ alone.

Grace is the only source. Faith is the only instrument. If I said, for example, I can't say I was saved by the surgeon's scalpel, I was saved by the surgeon's skill in the healing hand of God.

The scalpel is but an instrument, a tool in the hand of the surgeon. And so Christ, grace is the only source, faith is the only instrument, and Christ is the only object of your faith and mine.

He alone saves. But when you read or hear sola fide, or by faith alone, may our hearts be stirred, may we rejoice and tremble, for Paul affirms that the way you try to save yourself is no way at all.

Let me read from Romans 3.20. And you'll see notes from Romans 3.20 that parallel with Galatians 3 as Stan read earlier. For by works of the law, no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

[33 : 44] Works cannot save, they have not saved, they do not save, they will not save us. We neither have enough of good works, nor are they good enough.

The motive for our obedience, and kids, let me for a moment and forget parents, understand when I preach, I really want to engage the kids. So just understand, that's very purposeful.

The motive for our obedience is really tinged with impurity. And what do we mean by motive? We mean our why. Why do we do what we do?

Alright? Maybe some of you grow vegetables because you can't stand the thought of paying for something that you could grow. Others buy vegetables because you can't stand the thought of growing something for which you could give money.

Okay? They reveal your motive. Alright? And the motive for our obedience then is tainted with impurity. The character of our obedience, that is our works, is not fully in line with the word of God.

[34 : 57] And so often the goal of our obedience is not really perfectly centered upon the glory of God. Our motive, the motive of our obedience, rather than springing out of love for God, the character rather than being shaped by the word of God, the very end, the goal of our obedience, our works, is not really the glory of God, but too often the glory of what?

Self. If we're honest. So our works will not cut it.

God's way is faith. Moms and dads, make your home a seedbed of faith.

Cultivate faith in the hearts of your children. Show them the promises of God, the works and word of God, and present Christ as faith and trust worthy.

grace. Paul even says, if you'll notice back in Romans when he says, he was given grace and apostleship, look at this, to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among the nations.

[36 : 30] So if you come here to Grace Fellowship Church, which I've wanted to affectionately call Heaney Fellowship Church, but I shall abstain for the moment. But grace, I think it's beautiful.

That works. That's why we did grace as the first sola. Grace Fellowship Church, first sola. Sola gratia. Ah, that's great.

Unplanned. Sometimes you hit something without aiming at it, right? That's great. Paul says, he was given grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among nations.

The gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, is extending this invitation to you to repent and turn from your sin and a life where you are just wanting all the time what you want, when you want, how you want it, where you want it, to turn to God, to turn to Christ.

Not wanting your way, but a change of mind, what we call repentance. That's a gospel response, one of two. And then faith is like when you put the bear hug on your grandpa, your grandma, or mom, or dad, God, and you embrace and you say, God, I believe every one of your promises about Christ.

[38 : 04] And Christ is enough. I need no one else. I need nothing but the good news of Christ who died on the cross for sinners just like me.

There's a fourth of our solas, that's sola Deo Gloria. We've seen sola gratia by grace alone, solus Christus, Christ alone, sola fide, faith alone, but now we come to the glory of God alone.

Have you ever asked yourself this question, what is more compelling than the glory of God? Imagine this scene in Isaiah 6, these heavenly creatures with three pairs of wings, and Isaiah is saying, he had this vision, and there's Yahweh, Lord, in all caps, in the temple.

And the train of his robe in a way far more glorious than the most beautiful bride's train you ever saw is filling up the whole temple.

These cherubim, they're yelling out to each other. It's thriceful, holy, holy, holy.

[39 : 36] glory. And the earth, like a vessel, is full of his glory. There's only one response Isaiah is like, man, I'm done.

But it's amazing. He's like, I got nothing. But then he says, change apart. I got nothing, but God, what I got, I give to you.

Here am I. What? Here am I. God, send me. There's nothing more compelling than the glory of God.

Look in Romans 11 for a moment. After taking 11 chapters to lay out the whole scheme, the economy of redemption in Romans 1 through 11, Paul has this beautiful doxology in Romans 11, 36, for from him, source, through him, agency, to him, end, are all things to him be glory forever. Amen. Amen. We might abridge this, the Latin words here, to something like, to the glory of God alone or for the glory of God alone.

[41 : 12] Like the grace of God that's evident from the very first pages of Scripture to the end of Revelation, the glory of God is conspicuous to, from the creation narrative in the beginning of Genesis, to those closing scenes of the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth where righteousness will dwell forever and where there will be no more tears nor death, no more crying, nor mourning, nor pain anymore.

Not the glory or hubris of man, no crowds trying to build towers of Babel to make a great name for themselves, but this unrivaled, blinding, completely satisfying glory of God alone.

And so Paul says that the distinct purpose for which he and his fellow apostles received grace and apostleship was to bring about, back to Romans 1, to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations.

embassy worker in Beijing, China, where virtually all the countries of the world are represented with embassies, they understand that their mission is to represent with integrity the interests and mission of the ambassador, of their ambassador at their embassy as well as the country they represent and that's to preserve and further the good name of their own nation.

so it is with us. Don't gloss over, don't run by those last ten words of Romans 1, 5, for the sake of his name among all the nations.

[43 : 25] It's just another way of expressing the glory of God when we speak of the renown of his matchless name. This is the impulse behind those opening words of Psalms like Psalm 92 that the ladies saw in their retreat where the psalmist says it is good to give thanks to the Lord to sing praises to your name O Most High and then Psalm 96 1-2 O sing to the Lord a new song sing to the Lord bless his name sing to the Lord bless his name tell of his salvation from day to day you've already seen Paul's exultant benediction at the end or doxology at the end of Romans 11 and he concludes this doctrinal section of perhaps his greatest letter with a singular kind of funnel point that we could call the glory of God sola

Deo Gloria it's as though he stands back he surveys the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone and here's Paul with his final punctuating arms in the air exultation for from him and through him and to him are all things to him be glory forever amen God the living God is the source

and agent and goal of all things designed for this one thing glory now dads and moms I want to give a word of encouragement to you with your children you know that from Psalm 127 if you have children and you're familiar with the psalm that every family every couple has a quiver okay and you know that your little children are part of what fill up that quiver and they're likened to arrows your children and I'm even as I'm sure no doubt that brother

Stan in the parenting class will point this out your children are designed as glory arrows for you to shoot forth into this world to declare the greatness the majesty the goodness of God and to make his name known as Christ's ambassadors on one level it's fair your children are born completely dependent and you think your goal is to help them become independent and you you give them roots but you also give them wings you send them out but the the goal of the command to be fruitful and multiply in Genesis 1 paired with Psalm 127 is that these children that we bear that God gives to us that are not burdens that are blessings are to be prepared and to be shaped and therefore to be sent commissioned and sent out so that as the aroma of Christ we hope will fill our lives our homes this church so the great name of God and the aroma of his son will be known in waft to all the nations that's the purpose of God's gift of children to you that Romans 11:36 is more than an inspired the end it's like a word when Paul says amen he says let it be so this is that faithful word solo deo gloria when he says to him be glory forever amen there's a final solo and will be done solo gratia by grace alone solo

Christus through Christ alone solo fide by faith alone solo deo gloria to the glory of God alone or for the glory of God alone finally solo scriptura just a few more minutes there's only one more solo as we remember these transforming truths of the reformation some five centuries ago you really get no farther than verse two of Romans one and I don't know if this has ever struck you but look at Romans one and verse two he says speaking that God had promised this gospel beforehand through the prophets in the holy scriptures this is not today I think between my office at church and our house we have something like 20 copies of the Bible in English and Chinese I have a Greek New

Testament Hebrew Old Testament NIV TNIV New American Standard King James New King James you name it all over all right Holman living yeah probably got a maybe have a new living translation ESV all types of copies of God's word but when this letter when this manuscript was rolled out and Paul's letter arrived at Rome in Paul spoke of the gospel being revealed or promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures it wasn't like every saint in Rome there could be like yeah no problem I'll go home and look that up I got all these copies of the Bible that wasn't the case the New Testament canon wasn't completed it was still in formation and copies of the Hebrew Old Testament scriptures would have been uncommon and rare alright this is treasure when Paul says through the holy scriptures this is the final treasure of our five solas of the reformation sola scriptura we can say scripture alone or the word of

[49 : 58] God alone no need to quibble God has spoken as a church we're trying to have one word for each month our word for October was the word here in our memory verse for the month of October was Deuteronomy 6:4 and 5 here Israel the Lord our God the Lord is one and you shall what love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind but that great Shema here here and the summons to listen well implies that God has spoken he's spoken authoritatively and as the writer of the book of Hebrews has so clearly written in these last days Hebrews 1:2 he has spoken to us by his son whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world the traditions of men the uninspired writings of men though they be numerous though they express profound brilliance and diversity of thoughts maybe some of you appreciate someone like

C.S. Lewis these must yield to the only rule for faith and obedience the word of God is found in the holy scriptures of the old and new testaments and Paul pressed in his final letter 2nd Timothy he pressed the importance of the authority and the sufficiency of scripture to his protegee Timothy with these words in 2nd Timothy 3:16 and 17 and you know them all scripture is breathed out by God the plus us and it's profitable for this fourfold benefit of teaching for teaching for reproof for correction and for training in righteousness he says that the man of

God may be complete equipped for every good work in an earlier letter he would encourage Timothy in 1st Timothy 4:13 he said devote yourself to the public reading of scripture to exhortation and to teaching in the book of Acts 20 we read of Paul was absorbed in the word later in 2nd Timothy 4 Paul says this he says I call God now as witness to this charge Timothy I'm giving you in

his final letter to his protege he says here it is I'm going to give you this charge in God himself is the martyr is the witness of this charge I'm giving you preach the word don't get distracted with lesser things preach the word and so

Paul could have also said woe to me if I preach not the gospel Christ and him crucified so in closing the protestant reformation no really we could say the five solas for our transformation encourage you grace Christ faith glory scripture the remaining 27 days of November I give you a challenge as you read ask yourself in your reading where does your reading index where can you draw a dotted line between your reading and these transforming truths that were recovered praise God through the work the writings the preaching the focus of Luther and Calvin and Zwingli these men sola gratia solus

Christus sola fide sola Deo Gloria sola script let me ask you there's an axiom that it doesn't laud but it says it's one thing when you're dishonest with others but don't be dishonest with yourself let me ask you a question do you know something of God's grace we know from first John that the evidence that we know something of God's love for us is that we demonstrate love for one another in fact the Lord Jesus says right in both first John 13 and 15 if you love me as I've loved you so ought you also to love one another are you gracious with others that's telling that you know something of his grace completely undeserved secondly do you trust in

[55 : 39] Christ alone not your grades not the number of degrees behind your name but in Christ alone your faith and hope is found is it faith in the son of God and nothing and no one else that your hope you all ready to crash and burn on Tuesday if the election doesn't go the way you're hoping it will or are you going to be able to remind yourself through the promises of scripture that the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord he will turn it wherever he wishes this is God's world and so via Romans 13 anyone who comes in authority comes so with a provisional appointment from God alone it's not like God had busted coverage on a pass down field

I don't know how this is going to go Tuesday all right and so your faith then is in God and then all the spiritual blessings that are in his son third let me ask you this is the glory of God the zenith the absolute delight of your heart and soul are you happy if God is exalted in Christ Jesus is made known even if your name should be forgotten would you be glad but could you be happy for that the glory of God alone and then finally can you say that God's word alone is your authority for faith and a life of obedience do you in the course of a day do you think about the word and meditate on it the Psalms speak that righteous person is the one who meditates on

God's law day and night will you go away this morning and not think about Romans 1 1 through 7 or Romans 11 36 or the idea the these five sola of the Protestant transformation of sola gratia solis Christus sola fide sola dea gloria sola scriptura and how significant they are to our faith that God's word and not the counsel of the ungodly or the philosophy or spirit of this age is your authority for faith and a life of obedience may God help us find this day great joy in knowing that it's all by grace it's through Christ alone faith is the instrument is the pipe that delivers the grace of God that our delight our great joy is that

God's name is made great among the nations that we have something to do with his renown and that his word even if someone should attempt to burn the pages of it his word is our infallible rule for faith and life God help it to be so in our life and in the life of Grace Fellowship Church Amen as cheers yes