

Sola Christos - Christ Alone

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read, the book of Acts, Acts chapter 4, and if we read again at verse 7, Acts chapter 4 at verse 7.

And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power or by what name did you do this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by whom this man is standing before you well.

This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. 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.

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

So this evening we're continuing our study on the five Reformation solas. And as you know, the Reformation solas, they're five Latin phrases that summarize the theological convictions of the Reformers in the 16th century.

[1 : 42] And the Reformation solas, they teach us and they emphasize to us the foundation of true biblical Christianity. And as I've mentioned before, the reason we're studying these Reformation solas is not just because it's good for us to be reminded of the foundational truths of the Bible, but also because, as you know, last Tuesday was Reformation Day.

Tuesday the 31st of October marked 500 years, or the 500th anniversary since the beginning of the Reformation. And it was out of that great theological conflict between Roman Catholicism and what the Reformers emphasized, it was out of that conflict that these five Reformation solas emerged in order to provide this solid foundation for the Church of Jesus Christ to stand upon.

And these five Reformation solas, we've mentioned them before, they're sola scriptura, scripture alone, sola fide, faith alone, sola gratia, grace alone, sola Christos, Christ alone, and sola deo gloria, the glory of God alone.

And we've already considered the first three of these Reformation principles. We saw that sola scriptura emphasizes that scripture alone is our sole authority.

The word of God contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, it is the only rule to direct us on how we may glorify God and enjoy him forever.

[3 : 18] But you know, then the Reformers had to deal with the question, according to scripture alone, how can a sinner be made right with God? And what the Reformers discovered was that a sinner is made right or righteous with God, not by their good works, not by their acts of penance, not by their sacraments, not by their monetary gifts.

A sinner is saved simply by sola fide, faith alone. They're saved by sola fide, faith alone. But you know, the Reformers, they couldn't leave it there either, because then there was the question of how a sinner is saved.

How does a sinner receive that salvation? They're saved by faith, but how do they receive it? Is it by the sacraments? Is it by our merits? Is it by our charitable deeds? Is it by our indulgences?

How does a sinner receive salvation? And in contrast to Roman Catholicism, the Reformers taught from scripture alone, they taught that a sinner is saved by faith alone, and they receive salvation by grace alone.

Sola gratia, grace alone. A sinner receives salvation not by works, but by grace. It's God's gift. We're saved by grace through faith.

[4 : 36] It's the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. And so the Reformers taught that according to scripture alone, a sinner is saved by grace alone, through faith alone.

But then the question which the Reformers had to deal with was, who has merited that salvation to make it a gift?

Who purchased the gift of salvation for sinners? Who bought it? And the reason the Reformers had to ask this question was because the Roman Catholic Church taught that a sinner is saved by the merit of Jesus Christ and the saints.

And that in order to approach a holy God, a sinner must pray to Christ and to Mary and to the saints. Because Christ, Mary and the saints, they all intercede and pray on behalf of the sinner.

But as you would expect, the Reformers, they responded to this by giving the exclusive claim that salvation has been merited and purchased by sola Christos.

[5 : 43] Christ alone. Christ alone. And you know, that's what we've been reminded of here in this passage in Acts chapter 4. The Apostle Peter is preaching the exclusive way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

There is salvation in no one else, he says. There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. But you know, what I find remarkable is that when we consider the opposition that the apostles received from the religious leaders of their day, we can see that echoed in the history of the Reformation, where the established Roman Catholic Church, they didn't want to entertain a doctrine that proclaimed Christ alone.

They didn't want to entertain a doctrine of salvation that presented sola Christos. Because they always thought it was Jesus plus.

And so by drawing upon this passage and considering the connections that can be made between what the apostles experienced and the history of the Reformation, I'd like us to see that the message the apostles proclaimed, it was the same message that the Reformers proclaimed too.

In fact, the message of the apostles and the message of the Reformers was that there is no other proclamation, there is no other power, and there is no other person, except sola Christos, Christ alone.

[7 : 14] And they're the three headings. No other proclamation, no other power, and no other person. So if we look first of all at the heading, no other proclamation, no other proclamation.

Look at verse 1 of chapter 4. It says, And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them.

And they were greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of men that came came to about five thousand. Now, the book of Acts, the book of Acts is the second installment of a two-part drama about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Because the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts, they're like this two-volume set. They were both written by Luke. And it's a two-volume set that tells the story of salvation.

[8 : 23] And in the Gospel of Luke, we're reminded about what Jesus, has done for his church. That Jesus loved his church and he gave himself for them.

But the book of Acts is all about what Jesus is still doing in and through his church. And so both these volumes, they're to be valuable to us because together they both emphasize the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

But by the time we come to chapters 3 and 4 in the book of Acts, Luke has already told us that the resurrection has taken place.

And he's told us that Jesus has commissioned his church to go to the uttermost parts of the earth with the Gospel. And then he ascended up into heaven. The day of Pentecost came and the Holy Spirit came in power upon the whole church.

But then as Luke progresses into chapter 3, he wants us to see all the difficulties that the early church faced when they presented Jesus Christ as the only Savior of sinners.

[9 : 28] And he wants us to see these difficulties because for centuries, the Jews had been stuck in these traditions from the Pharisees. And they were repeatedly told, the people were told, that their salvation depended upon obedience to God's law and to all the rituals and to all the sacrifices of the Old Testament system.

And to try and challenge the establishment on any of these points, it was going to be difficult. Just like it was for the Reformers. Because in a similar way, the Reformers were trying to challenge the established Roman Catholic Church.

And they were trying to challenge them on doctrines that had been wrongly taught for centuries. And to try and undermine a system that had been ingrained in people for generations, it was going to be no easy task.

But like it was for the Apostles, the Reformers saw that the name of Jesus was at stake. And that's what we see in this passage. Because at the beginning of chapter 3, we didn't read it, but it's very closely connected to chapter 4.

At the beginning of chapter 3, Peter and John, they go to the temple to pray. And on their way, they meet this man who is lame from birth. He's 40 years old.

[10 : 46] That's what we read in our passage. He's been, he's 40 years old. He's been lame from birth. And he's sitting there begging for money. And Peter stops and he looks at this man and he says to the man, silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee.

This is what I'll give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And we're told that Peter took the man by the hand and immediately his legs were strengthened and he began to walk.

And it was this great miracle. It's a great miracle seeing this lame man walking, but it was also going to cause chaos and confusion among the people. Because when the people heard what had happened, they were all asking, how did this happen?

How did this miracle take place? And with such boldness, Peter told the people that salvation came to this lame man by faith. Salvation came, he says, by faith in Jesus Christ.

And he says, it's that same Jesus whom you delivered over to be crucified. It's that same Jesus whom God raised from the dead. And with that, Peter, he's then preaching to the audience and he's pleading with the people and saying to them, repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.

[12 : 09] But as Peter is preaching, the religious leaders, they get wind of it. And they listen in. And that's where chapter 4 begins. Because we're told that as the religious leaders appear, they get so annoyed with them that they arrest Peter and John and then they take them into custody.

But you know what's fascinating? Is that the religious leaders were annoyed because the establishment was losing control of the people. We're told in verse 4 that over 5,000 people heard the word and believed.

Over 5,000 people heard that Jesus Christ was crucified for sinners and raised from the dead and they believed. But the religious establishment, they didn't like this because they were losing control of the people.

Receiving salvation in Jesus Christ meant that the people no longer needed the sacrificial system and all its rituals that came along with it. Salvation in Jesus Christ meant that all they needed was Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ and Him crucified. All they needed for their salvation was sola Christos, Christ alone. And that's also what caused so much chaos at the Reformation.

[13 : 26] The Reformers taught and preached that salvation, it doesn't come through the church. Salvation is not dependent upon our baptism or upon Mary or the saints or the Pope or the priests or any of the sacraments or even our merits before God.

No, the Reformers stressed that salvation only comes through Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone. And you know, like the religious leaders in the first century dealing with the apostles and the religious leaders in the 16th century dealing with the Reformers, the religious leaders wanted to keep them quiet.

They wanted to silence them completely. And they did that with many of them. They put them in prison. They tortured them. Worse still, they put them to death.

the religious establishment wanted to keep control of the people even if it meant leading them to hell.

But you know, the resounding message from the apostles and the Reformers was that there's no other proclamation to give. There's no other proclamation. There's no other message.

[14 : 40] Because salvation is not about the church. It's not about the religious establishment. It's not about denominations. It's not even about us. It's all about Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone.

And the proclamation which the apostles preached and the proclamation which the Reformers preached it's the same proclamation. Because there's no other proclamation.

They proclaimed the gospel of a crucified and risen saviour. They proclaimed Christ and him crucified. They proclaimed the wonder of salvation and the power of the resurrection.

They proclaimed not themselves but Jesus Christ as Lord. My friend, there is no other proclamation because there is this is the only proclamation that will bring salvation to lost sinners.

And that salvation it's promised to us if we respond in faith. You know the apostle Paul he reminds us he says if you confess with your mouth the name of the Lord Jesus and if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead then you will be saved.

[15 : 57] You will be saved. Because there's no other proclamation. There's no other way to be saved. Only through Jesus Christ.

No other proclamation except sola Christos Christ alone. But there's also no other power he says except through sola Christos. No other power. That's what we see secondly.

Look at verse 5. It says on the next day the rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and all who were of the high priestly family.

And when they had set them in the midst they inquired by what power or by what name did you do this? And in these verses we read that on the following day after Peter and John had been arrested they were brought to stand trial before all the religious leaders and there were many religious leaders because we're told that there were rulers and elders and scribes and there were high priests they were all there and there were even four high priests not one but four high priests Annas Caiaphas John and Alexander and Peter and John they're called to stand before the religious elite the religious establishment and there to give an account of their proclamation the proclamation that Jesus Christ is a risen and exalted saviour and we're told that when Peter and John stood before the religious leaders they interrogated them by asking the question in St. Stephen verse 7 by what power or by what name did you do this?

And what the religious leaders are referring to is the man who had been born lame and they're asking how can this man now walk? How did that man walk?

[17 : 59] How did salvation come to him? From whom did he receive salvation? And with all these questions we're told that Peter filled with the Holy Spirit that's verse 8 he said to them rulers of the people and elders if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man and by what means this man has been healed let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead by him this man is standing before you well.

And what Peter was saying was that this man received salvation from Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone. The power of salvation it came to this crippled man not through sacrifices not through his obedience to the law not through his tithing or his fasting or his praying salvation came to this crippled man from Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone.

And you know this is what we have to grasp here salvation through Jesus Christ is available to sinners because of the power of the resurrection. And the reason Jesus Christ was raised from the dead was because his life of obedience to God's law was perfect.

And his death in obedience to God's will was perfect. And it's because of Christ's obedience unto death even the death of the cross it's because of his perfect obedience in life and in death that Christ alone has merited salvation.

No one else has merited salvation on behalf of sinners because no one else has kept God's holy law perfectly. No one else has given their life as a ransom for many.

[20 : 00] Not the Pharisees not the scribes not Mary not the saints not the Pope no one has kept God's holy law perfectly and given their life as a sacrifice upon a cross except sola Christos Christ alone.

No one has merited salvation on behalf of us except Christ alone. And the evidence that Christ alone has merited salvation on behalf of sinners is the resurrection.

in order to prove that the perfect life and perfect sacrifice of Christ was accepted by God God raised him from the dead.

The empty tomb and the power of the resurrection is the evidence. That's the sign and seal that Jesus Christ has purchased salvation and secured redemption. And you know my friend when anyone ever asks you like they asked Peter and John whenever they ask you by what power or by what name are you saved you tell them that you're saved by no other power except the power of the resurrection and you're saved by no other name except the name of Jesus Christ.

And you know this is the beauty of our salvation that we're saved we're brought from darkness to light we're made a new creation we're justified before a holy God we become sons and daughters of God not by our merits not by our good works not by keeping the law not by being a good person not by the sacraments not by the paying of indulgences not by the Pope not by praying to Mary not by the saints not by our ability to do anything to save ourselves my friend we are saved by the power that raised Christ out of the grave the power of the resurrection and we're saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and this is the point that the apostles and the reformers stressed to the religious leaders of their day they stressed that there is one God and there is one mediator between God and men the man

[22 : 25] Christ Jesus and you know what Peter said of the Pharisees and the scribes during the early church it was also said or it could also be said to the priests and the popes during the reformation he says in verse 11 this Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you the builders which has become the cornerstone the religious establishment they rejected the chief cornerstone Jesus Christ but when we hear the word cornerstone we mustn't think that the chief cornerstone was the foundation stone because in ancient Israel the chief cornerstone it wasn't the foundation stone it was the capstone it wasn't the first stone in the structure but the last stone in the structure it was the capstone the crowning glory the chief cornerstone literally it's the stone which is at the head of the corner and the temple in the old testament if you were to see it it had this chief cornerstone and interestingly many of the churches that were built during the 19th century they have adopted this idea of a chief cornerstone you see the stone above the door of the church you see it in Shabbos and you'll see it in the church of Scotland you see this the stone above the door it's the chief stone placed on top of the building above the front door and the chief cornerstone it was raised up and put in this prominent position for all to see and this is the point that

Peter is making about Jesus because Peter is saying that Jesus was the cornerstone he was the capstone of salvation he was the crowning glory of God's purpose of salvation and although he was rejected by the religious leaders and crucified upon a Roman cross and buried in a borrowed grave Peter says God raised him up God raised him up God put him in that prominent position God made him the crowning glory of the work of salvation the religious establishment yes they rejected Jesus but God made him the chief cornerstone and because Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone Peter says he alone has purchased salvation and he alone has accomplished redemption he's the only mediator between God and men and because he's the only mediator between God and men we have to come to this Jesus for our salvation because there's no other person there's no other person to come to there's no other person and that's what I'd like us to consider last of all we've seen that there is no other proclamation no other message to give except sola

Christos Christ alone there's no other power no other power to save us except the power of the resurrection from sola Christos Christ alone and lastly there's no other person no other person to come to except sola Christos Christ alone no other person that's what he says in verse 12 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 you know this verse it's only one of many verses in the bible that makes the exclusive claim that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation we've already mentioned another verse that makes this exclusive claim the verse where Paul says there is one God and one mediator between God and men the man

Christ Jesus and he's the mediator Paul says because he gave himself as a ransom for all there's no other mediator there's no other intermediary there's no other intercessor Mary will not do the dead saints will not do the Pope will not do the priests will not do it's only Christ alone another exclusive verse would be in 1st John if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness only because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin the blood of Jesus doesn't cleanse us from some sin or just our past sins or part of our sin whereby we have to do the rest by confessing to the priest and praying to Mary and the saints no the exclusive claim of sola scriptura is that the blood of Jesus

Christ cleanses us from all all our sin past present future but you know the most exclusive claim in the Bible that Jesus is the only saviour of sinners it came from Jesus himself Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through me Jesus doesn't say I am our way I am our truth and I am our life he doesn't say that he's one of many ways to choose from he doesn't say that he's one of many truths amongst a host of other truths he doesn't even say that eternal life is like the offer of all the other religions no Jesus categorically states I am the way I am the truth and the life no one no one comes to the father except through me and you know my friend many will tell you that Jesus is only one of many ways to be saved they'll tell you that it doesn't matter what religion you follow you'll all get to heaven but when

[29 : 05] Jesus says I am the way the truth and the life he cuts through every other religion and every other philosophy and every other faith belief that has ever been presented to mankind and Jesus he categorically states that if we don't deny ourselves and if we don't take up our cross and if we don't follow after him and him alone then we cannot we will not and it is impossible for us to be saved impossible and what Jesus teaches us so clearly is that every other religion every other idol every other god every other sect every other cult every other faith belief they are the wrong way they are utterly false and they all lead to eternal death in hell because Christ and Christ alone is the way the truth and the life and this is what Peter is emphasizing to the religious leaders here there is salvation in no one else there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must we must be saved there is no other person no other person that is able to deliver us from the power of sin and death than the person of Jesus

Christ and what Peter is saying here this is also what the reformers emphasized to the religious establishment of the Roman Catholic Church because for centuries Rome deceived the people they deceived them making them think that they needed something more than Jesus and they made the people swallow the lie that God wouldn't accept them if they didn't carry out all these extra religious duties and this is where reformed theology diverges most clearly with Roman Catholicism because Roman Catholicism teaches that in order to be saved we need Jesus plus the prayers of Mary Jesus plus the prayers of the saints Jesus plus the prayers of the Pope Jesus plus confession to the priest Jesus plus paying indulgences to be forgiven Jesus plus my baptism Jesus plus all the sacraments Jesus plus the mass it's always

Jesus plus Jesus plus Jesus plus but you know all these false religions all these man centered religions whether it's Roman Catholicism or Islam or Buddhism or Jehovah Witnesses or Mormonism or Sikhism all these false religions are based entirely upon self justification self justification in which a person earns God's acceptance by being a good person and doing good works and you know we might be convinced some people are convinced into thinking that these false religions are worth following just because well these followers are so strict in their outlook and they're so fervent in their worship but you know it doesn't matter how fervent they are in the religion doesn't matter how many times the Roman Catholic takes mass doesn't matter how many faithful

Muslims are saying their prayers to Allah doesn't matter how many doors Jehovah witnesses knock on doesn't matter how many times Mormons can repeat all their laws off by heart Jesus is saying to us that they're all the wrong way and they're all utterly false and they're all leading to eternal death in hell this is the reality of it of what the Bible is teaching and you know someone once said the difference between Christianity and all the other religions of the world is that all the other religions they're all about trying to reach up to God they're all about trying to reach upwards but he says the beauty of Christianity is that it's all about God reaching downwards it's God reaching down to sinful man and you know that's what grace is it's God reaching down it's God's riches given to us at Christ's expense that's what grace is

God's riches at Christ's expense but you know my friend do you know what you're saying when you reject the grace of God and Jesus Christ do you know what you're saying when you reject Jesus Christ as your savior you're saying that Jesus is not enough you're saying that Jesus is not enough you're saying that salvation is Jesus plus Jesus plus my baptism Jesus plus my upbringing Jesus plus my godly parents Jesus plus my church attendance Jesus plus my Sabbath keeping Jesus plus my my tithing Jesus plus my hat Jesus plus my suit Jesus plus my Bible reading Jesus plus my Bible knowledge Jesus plus my prayers

[34 : 43] Jesus plus my good works whether we're converted or unconverted it's never Jesus plus plus it's never Jesus plus but by rejecting Jesus Christ as your savior you're saying to him he's not enough he's not enough I need something more but you know the message of salvation we've gone through it again and again it's faith in Jesus Christ trusting yourself to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone it's nothing extra no plus because there's no other proclamation no other proclamation to give you except sola Christos Christ alone there's no other power to save you except sola Christos Christ alone there's no other person for you to trust in except sola

Christos Christ alone because there's no other name under heaven given among men whereby you must be saved other than the name of Jesus but you know there's nothing that I've said this evening that you don't know already because you already know that Jesus Christ is the only saviour of sinners you already know that there's no other proclamation worth listening to except Christ alone you already know that there's no other power to save you except faith in Jesus Christ alone you already know that there's no other person who's able to deliver you from condemnation in hell except sola Christos Christ alone and so if you know this already what's stopping you if you know it already what's holding you back what's holding you back from taking that step of faith committing and committing your life to Jesus

Christ what is it that's holding you back because as we said earlier on the promise of the Bible is that if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord if you say publicly it has to be with the mouth if you say publicly Jesus is my Lord you know that's when liberty comes that's when this burden that's holding you back is lifted that's when it'll happen you think how will it happen you confess him publicly as your Lord that's when it happens this is what the Bible is teaching if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord liberty will come that's when the burden will be lifted that's when relief will come if you confess with your mouth and if you believe in your heart which you already do I have no doubt about that if you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead then you will be saved so the issue is not believing the issue is confessing confessing sola crystals

Christ alone is my saviour don't wait another another moment confess him as your lord confess him as your saviour tell it to other people Jesus is my saviour I want to follow him I want to know him I want to be his child and I want to follow him all the days of my life when you want to love to him all because you know for certain there is no other name under heaven given among men by which you must be saved sola Christos you can only be saved by Christ alone may the lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray oh lord our gracious god bless thy word to us we pray we give thanks lord for the reminder that it is not of ourselves that we are saved but only by Christ and by

Christ alone help us then not to trust in ourselves not to lean upon self but to let go of self and to trust completely upon Jesus to rest and receive him by faith and by faith alone bless us lord we pray bless us as we gather for fellowship this evening that as we hear the testimony of marina that these things would be blessed to us and lord encourage her lord as she speaks that she would know the upholding and the strengthening of thy grace and thy grace alone do us good then we pray go before us for Jesus sake amen we shall conclude by singing the words of psalm 72 psalm 72 page 314 the last three verses of the psalm we were looking there that there's no other name under heaven by which we must be saved and Solomon who wrote this psalm psalm 72 he reminds us that his name that name by which we must be saved it shall endure and last like the sun that men shall be blessed in him and blessed and all nations shall him call we'll sing down to the end of the psalm of psalm 72 to God's praise to God's praise hope then salemem leened

[41 : 19] In Him my place, all nations shall live all.

Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God of Israel.

For He, our Lord, doth wondrous works in glory thine excel.

Now blessed be His glorious name to all eternity.

The poor and bread is forgiven. Amen.

[42 : 36] So let it be. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.