

THE FIVE SOLAS

Talk 5: Grace Alone (*Sola Gratias*)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Introduction

1. Our need of grace (Ephesians 2:1-3)

*“Dead in trespasses and sins, human beings are as passive as corpses in securing their own salvation from sin.”
Carl Trueman, *Grace Alone*, p40*

2. The God of grace (Ephesians 2:4-7)

⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1-10, NIV)

3. The life of grace (Ephesians 2:8-10)

- **A life free from boasting**

- **A life of good works**

Grace, grace, grace paid for my sins and brought me to life.

Grace, grace, grace, clothes me with power to do what is right.

Grace, grace, grace will lead me to heaven where I'll see your face.

- **A life of real assurance**

“For my own part, I frankly confess that even if it were possible, I should not wish to have free choice given to me, or to have anything left in my own hands by which I might strive towards salvation. For, on the one hand, I should be unable to stand firm and keep hold of it amid so many adversities and perils and so many assaults of demons, seeing that even one demon is mightier than all men, and no man at all could be saved; and on the other hand, even if there were no perils or adversities or demons, I should nevertheless have to labor under perpetual uncertainty and to fight as one beating the air, since if I lived and worked to eternity, my conscience would never be assured and certain how much it ought to do to satisfy God.

For whatever work might be accomplished, there would always remain an anxious doubt whether it pleased God or whether he required something more, as the experience of all self-justifiers proves, and as I myself learned to bitter cost through so many years. But now, since God has taken my salvation out of my hands into his, making it depend on his choice and not mine, and has promised to save me, not by my own work or exertion but by his grace and mercy, I am assured and certain both that he is faithful and will not lie to me, and also that he is too great and powerful for any demons or any adversities to be able to break him or to snatch me from him. “No one,” he says, “shall snatch them out of my hand, because my Father who has given them to me is greater than all.” [John 10:28]

- Martin Luther, *‘On the Bondage of the Will’*



For reflection

Grace Alone Song

When you see that your deeds leave you stuck in the weeds - that's a sola!
When you see you're enslaved and utterly depraved - that's a sola!
When you're freed from the need to impress and succeed - that's a sola!
When you'll see the Lord's face and it's all of God's grace - that's a sola!

Nothing in my hand I bring,
simply to the cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress;
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Saviour, or I die.
- *Rock of Ages, Augustus M Toplady*

Exodus 33:19 And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

Exodus 34:6 The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

John 1:16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.