

Celebrating our Theological Underwear

Oct. 29, 2017

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship: Grace Alone by Dustin Kensrue

(Here is a song to help your group as you worship. Simply play the video and encourage people to use it to enter into a spirit of worship.)

I was an orphan lost at the Fall
Running away when I'd hear Your call
But Father, You worked Your will
I had no righteousness of my own
I had no right to draw near Your throne
But Father, You loved me still

{Chorus}

And in love before You laid the world's foundation
You predestined to adopt me as Your own
You have raised me so high up above my station
I'm a child of God by grace and grace alone

You left Your home to seek out the lost
You knew the great and terrible cost
But Jesus, Your face was set
I worked my fingers down to the bone
Nothing I did could ever atone
But Jesus, You paid my debt

{Chorus}

By Your blood, I have redemption and salvation

Lord, You died that I might reap what you have sown
And You rose that I might be a new creation
I am born again by grace and grace alone

I was in darkness all of my life
I never knew that day from the night
But Spirit, You made me see
I swore I knew the way on my own
Head full of rocks, a hear made of stone
But Spirit, You moved in me

{Chorus}

At your touch my sleeping spirit was awakened
On my darkened heart the light of Christ has shone
Called into a kingdom that cannot be shaken
Heaven's citizen by grace and grace alone

So I'll stand in faith by grace and grace alone
I will run the race by grace and grace alone
I will slay my sin by grace and grace alone
I will reach the end by grace and grace alone.

Icebreaker

Have you ever felt strongly about something and protested for or against a certain cause? Tell your story.

Text for Discussion: Romans 1:17

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

Theology – the study of God or ultimate things – is never an end in itself. It is the essential foundation of true, warm and vital Christianity, and we seek to live in the beauty of God that this makes possible. So, in light of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, let's look at that foundation through these traditional 5 Solas (literally "Alones"): God rescues us by grace *alone* through Christ *alone* received by faith *alone* so that all things lead to the glory of God *alone*, with scripture *alone* as our primary authority on how to live.

Grace Alone – “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 [we] have been saved” (Eph 2). Righteousness isn't something for us to acquire by effort or merit or diligence. It is entirely a gift of God, to receive by faith. We therefore make zero contribution to our righteousness, nor can we improve upon it. Jesus alone is enough.

Through Christ Alone – Christ alone is the basis on which God's justice is satisfied and God becomes eternally for us. Jesus is not an accessory to our lives; he is the foundation. And whenever we try to add something to Christ, we nullify the grace of God. “For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5).

Received by Faith Alone – “For by grace alone [we] have been saved through faith. And this is not of [our] own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works” (Eph 2:8-9). Despite our desire and efforts to prove ourselves and justify our lives, our justification is not a reward. It is an undeserved gift from God that is awarded to us. It is Christ alone who saves us, not our faith, which means our confidence is in Him alone, not in how well we follow Jesus or think we understand Him (Rom 4:5).

Based on Scripture Alone – The supreme authority of what Christians should believe is the Bible. Our final authority is scripture alone, but not a scripture that is alone. That is why we have creeds and confessions – not to assert our interpretations over the Bible, but so we might better understand what it as a whole is teaching.

To the Glory of God Alone – Everything ultimately exists for the glory of God (Rom 11:36). That is the direction of all of history and of our lives. How do we live this way? In all that we do, we are called to give our best effort... and then release the results to God. So that no human being might boast in the presence of God and that the Lord alone will be exalted (1Cor 1:29).

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

How can we live our life to the Glory of God alone?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

Opening questions...

- Look at Rom 1:17. What stands out to you?
- What are the foundations of your faith? Did theology play a role in your coming to faith?

Digging Deeper...

- Look at Eph. 2:1-5. What does it mean to live by grace alone? When was there a point in your life when you experienced grace and your need for it? In what ways might you be consciously or unconsciously trying to earn God's grace or favor?
- Look at 1 Timothy 2:5. In what areas of your life are you trying to add to Christ (Jesus plus...)? In what ways do you need to trust more in Christ and less in yourself?
- Look at Rom. 4:5. Is there something in your life that keeps you from believing that God is 100% for you?
- Look at 2 Tim. 3:16. In what ways is it hard to look at God's word as the final authority on your life? How can we help each other be a praying and Bible reading community?
- Look at Rom. 11:36. In what ways do you try to steal glory from God? How does God's Glory affect your daily life?

Application Questions...

- How can we help each other give God the Glory in everything that we do?
- What is one thing we can do between now and our next meeting to act on the reality of what we explored today?

Praying for One Another

(Here are some ideas from the study to help focus your time in prayer as a group. Use by themselves or along with other prayer requests.)

- Thank God that he stood in our place on the cross and died for our sins.
- Pray that we give God the Glory in everything that we do.
- Pray that we would accept the grace that God has given us knowing that there is nothing we can do to earn it.

Experiment of the Week

In the celebration of the 500th year of the reformation, take some time to reflect on the 5 pillars of:
Grace Alone,
Through Christ alone,
Received by Faith alone,
To the Glory of God alone,
Based on Scripture alone.

Choose one to focus on for the week.

Grace Alone (maybe there is someone that you need to extend grace too or forgive)

Through Christ Alone (maybe there is an area in your life where you are doing everything on your own but instead need to trust Christ)

Received by Faith alone (maybe there is an area where God is calling you to have faith)

To the Glory of God alone (maybe you are experiencing pride in area of your life that you need to give to God)

Based on Scripture alone (pick a passage in the Bible to memorize for the week)

Talk about your experience with your group next week.

Reminder: Please encourage group members to consider attending:

New Leader Training

Saturday, November 4th: 9:00 am-12:15 pm

<https://pacificcrossroads.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/730>

Note: Attending does not commit you to leading, but if you are interested in leading a group this is the necessary first step.