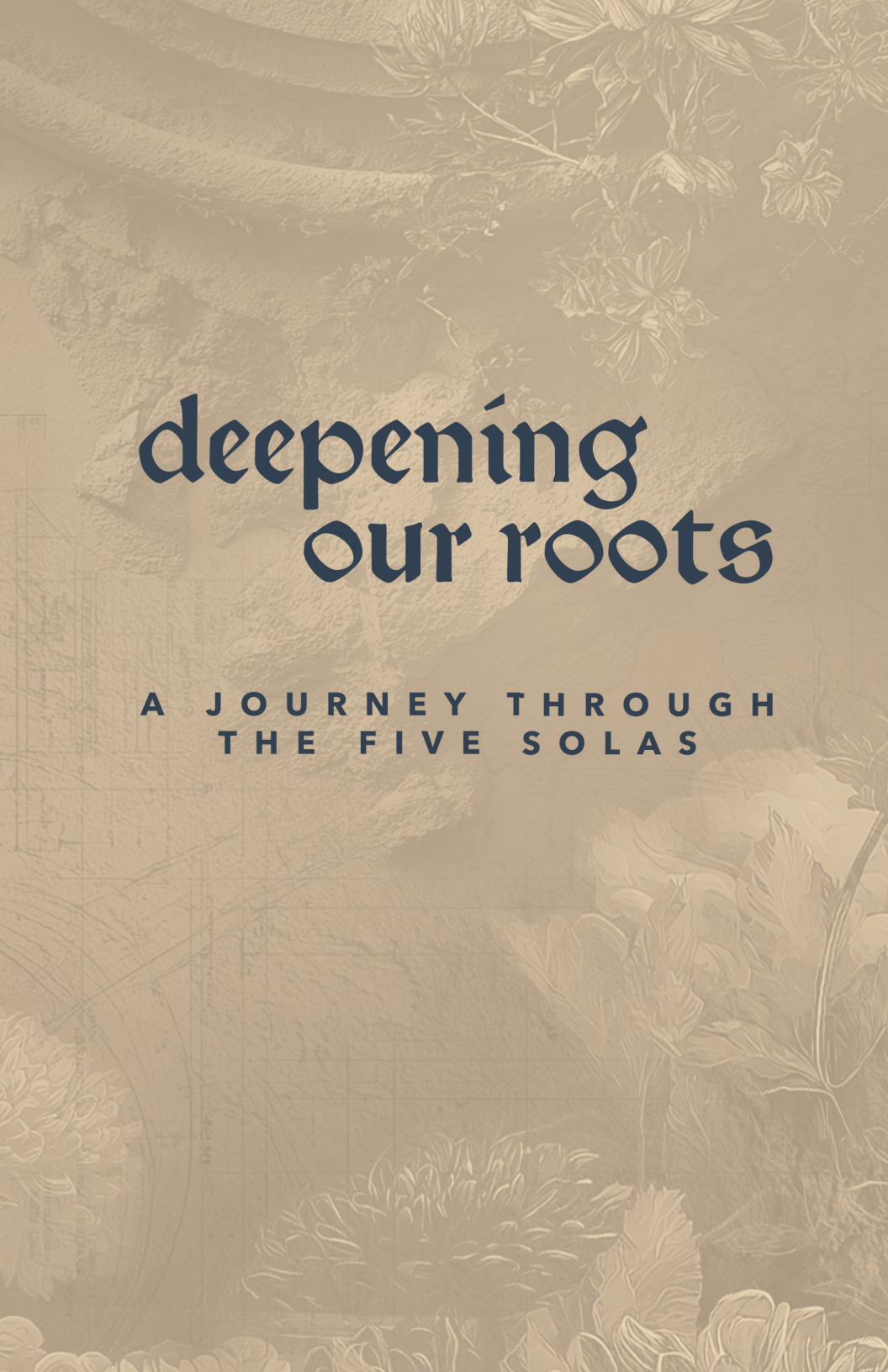




deepening our roots

A JOURNEY THROUGH
THE FIVE SOLAS



the five solas

SCRIPTURE ALONE

CHRIST ALONE

FAITH ALONE

GRACE ALONE

GLORY TO GOD ALONE

introduction

In the 16th century, Martin Luther began a movement known as the Reformation. This marked the beginning of Protestantism, which is a return to the Bible guiding the Christian faith. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther wrote *the Ninety Five Theses* (or arguments) and nailed them to the door of a church because he wanted the Christian faith to be rooted in the biblical narrative. His ideas spread quickly thanks to the printing press, which led to the Protestant Reformation, a major movement that changed Christianity forever.

The Five Solas are five statements of faith, or big ideas, that came out of the Protestant Reformation, which reintroduced people to a biblical understanding of the gospel, the Kingdom of God, the Church, and her mission. When we learn about the Five Solas, we see that the Bible is our guide, that we have faith and are saved by God's free grace through Jesus, and that all honor and praise belong to God alone.

The word "sola" is Latin for "alone." As you read through this guide, you will see why these statements have become known as the Five Solas.

SOLA SCRIPTURA

Scripture alone

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 CSB

Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- 2 Peter 1:20-21 CSB

A CLOSER LOOK

Scripture is God's inspired Word. It is inerrant, sufficient, and the final authority for the Church. This means that, in its original manuscripts, the Bible is without error and that the original writers of the Scriptures were divinely influenced. God is the source and author of the Bible's message. Some translations of 2 Timothy 3:16 say that Scripture is "God-breathed."

This also means that the Bible contains all that is needed for a person to have knowledge of salvation and how to live a good life. Scripture is God's revelation of Himself, and in these words, we can know God's story. In knowing God's story, we can find our place in it.

Sola Scriptura teaches us, in the end, that all other authorities in the Christian life serve underneath Scripture, while

Scripture alone rules over other authorities. For it alone is God's inspired, inerrant, and sufficient Word.

DISCUSSION

- How do you think knowing the Bible better will affect your faith?
- What habits do you have surrounding Scripture reading? What habits would you like to establish?
- Why is it important to know God's story?

PRAYER

God, thank You for giving us the gift of Your Word so that we could come to know You and have a relationship with You. Help me to continue to search Your Word because it says that, when I seek You with my whole heart, I will find You. May Your Spirit guide me as I read the Scriptures. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Christ alone

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- *John 1:1 CSB*

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- *John 1:14 CSB*

But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been revealed, attested by the Law and the Prophets. The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe, since there is no distinction. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented Him as the mercy seat by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed. God presented Him to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

- *Romans 3:21-26 CSB*

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.

- *1 Timothy 2:5 CSB*

A CLOSER LOOK

It is a gift from God that Scripture is our final authority because in Scripture we are given Jesus Christ Himself. In the Bible we read about how Jesus was the Word in the beginning and that He became flesh to dwell among us. We learn that Jesus is fully God and fully man, our Savior and King.

Sometimes we may think that there is something we must do in order to earn salvation or make ourselves worthy before God. Scripture tells us, however, that it is in and through **Christ alone** that we achieve salvation and new life. In Jesus, we are adopted into God's family.

This is why everything we do at Transformation Church is Christ-centered: from the sermons we preach, to the worship music we sing, to the discipleship resources we create. Our desire is to point to Jesus because in Him "we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

DISCUSSION

- John 1 talks about the Word, which is Jesus. What do the verses listed above tell us about who Jesus is? Why is this important?
- What does it mean for Jesus to be fully God and fully man?
- How does being adopted into God's family change the way you view yourself and others?

PRAYER

Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, so that I can have new life and be a part of Your family. May I look only to Jesus—and not to anything else—for life and salvation. In Jesus' name. Amen.

faith alone

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift— not from works, so that no one can boast.

- *Ephesians 2:8-9 CSB*

For we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

- *Romans 3:28 CSB*

And yet because we know that a person is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we ourselves have believed in Christ Jesus. This was so that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no human being will be justified.

- *Galatians 2:16 CSB*

A CLOSER LOOK

Knowing that salvation comes through Christ alone, how does one receive this gift? It is not through works; it is through **faith alone** in Jesus. We don't trust in ourselves or others for salvation; we trust in Jesus. His life is now our life. His righteousness is now our righteousness. His victory is now our victory.

Do you ever feel like you have to earn your way into salvation? Well, you don't! There is no need to strive for perfection; simply trust in the finished work of Jesus.

Salvation is received through **faith alone**, not by any human obedience to the law of God or by works or by ethnic identity or by status. Faith in Jesus is enough for our redemption, reconciliation, and justification. Any good works or obedience we exhibit to Jesus is the fruit (or result) of genuine faith, not a way to attain salvation.

DISCUSSION

- Why is it important to know we cannot earn our way to salvation? How does this change the way we relate to God and the way we relate to others?
- What is the difference between doing good works to earn salvation and doing good works as a result of salvation?
- What act of obedience is God calling you towards this week?

PRAYER

Father, thank You for making a way for me to be in relationship with You through Your Son. Jesus, I place all my faith and trust in You. Spirit, continue to cultivate good fruit in my life as a result of my saving faith in Christ. In Jesus' name. Amen.

grace alone

For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before Him.

- *Ephesians 1:4 CSB*

So then, it does not depend on human will or effort but on God who shows mercy.

- *Romans 9:16 CSB*

For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift.

- *Ephesians 2:8 CSB*

A CLOSER LOOK

If the work of Jesus is the basis of our salvation, and if we are justified by God, not on the basis of our works but only through faith in the work of Jesus, then it follows that our salvation is by **grace alone**. Salvation is a gift from God, granted by His grace and not based on our human obedience, ethnicity, or action. This stresses the undeserved and unearned nature of God's grace in the process of salvation.

This grace is not limited to our initial salvation; it spans the whole of our Christian journey. The good works we do are a result of grace. The growth we experience is a result of grace. Through grace we are called out of darkness and into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). Through grace we are raised from spiritual death to spiritual life. Through grace we go into the world and help others to know Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- What has been your understanding of grace previously? How has it changed as you have learned more about God's grace?
- Grace is not something you "graduate" from. How have you seen evidence of God's grace throughout your life?
- Who in your life needs to hear this message of grace? How can you share it with them?

PRAYER

God, thank You for giving me grace I don't deserve so that I can have new life in Christ. Holy Spirit, empower me to continue growing and bearing fruit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SOLI DEO GLORIA

glory to God alone

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 CSB

Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, let it be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, let it be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To Him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

- 1 Peter 4:10-11 CSB

Our Lord and God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, because You have created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.

- Revelation 4:11

A CLOSER LOOK

Only if our salvation is by grace alone will **God alone receive all the glory**. If we try to do any of this in our own power, then we no longer boast in Christ alone. But if God is the author and finisher of our salvation, then He alone gets all the glory.

Soli Deo gloria, in a sense, is both the beginning and the end of the other four Solas. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures to the glory of God alone. Jesus Christ humbled Himself to the point of death and was raised to new life to

the glory of God alone. Grace and mercy are offered to us to the glory of God alone. Justification is by faith alone to the glory of God alone.

God's glory is one of His attributes. He also manifests His glory in creation and redemption, most significantly in the person and work of Jesus. God also glorifies Himself in and through the Church. We are called to do all that we do to the glory of God. We are to use our gifts to serve one another so that God may be glorified in everything. Through it all, God gets the glory.

DISCUSSION

- How do you see God's glory manifested in creation around you?
- Why is it important that God gets all the glory?
- What gifts do you have? How can you use your gifts to serve others?

PRAYER

God, thank You for giving me gifts so that I may use them to serve others. Empower me with Your Spirit to make an impact in my community. May You receive all the glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

notes





TRANSFORMATION
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