



“The Reformation / A Celebration of Historical Perseverance”

5 Solas wk. 2 – Sola Fide

By Pastor Jody May 11/07/2021

Galatians 2:15-21ESV

Justified by Faith

¹⁵ We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶ yet we know that a person is **not justified by works** of the law but **through faith** in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be **justified by faith** in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be **justified**.

[CONNECT/INTRO]

Sola Fide, by Faith Alone are we saved. It is a simple answer to Salvation but without God it is an impossible task. It's easy to say, but impossible to accept without God's grace. **This doctrine/teaching is what separates Christianity from every other religion. All other religions teach about what you must accomplish in order to save oneself, whatever that Salvation looks like.**

Well, your question may be, **“Why do I need to be saved, from what?”**

Exodus 34:6-7 ESV

“The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, **but who will by no means clear the guilty**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

There is a need to be saved because scripture explains that God will by no means, **clear the guilty**. There is no way possible for God who is perfectly just to clear guilt. Guilt is a **byproduct** of sin that was done. So, guilt is a present tense state from a past action meaning you did **something wrong**. God cannot clear the record of sin for if He did it would negate His perfect attribute of Justice and Holiness. He would cease to be fair, making Him like everyone else, He ceases to be God.

“What makes you think I have guilt?” Because we can witness in our culture the number one way to sway you on making any kind of decision is to play on your guilt. To appeal to your desire to do something to save yourself.



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- If you don't vote this way, it is the end of democracy.
- If you don't give to this charity this person will starve, this dog will be left in the cold, this rainforest will be destroyed eradicating this species x,y,z.
- If you don't stop burning fossil fuels, you'll destroy our climate.
- If you don't take serious global warming, you hate your grandkids leaving them with your disastrous choices.
- If you don't get the COVID shot, you will kill someone OR if you don't wear a mask you don't care about your neighbor's health.
- If you don't put your kids in Public School your probably racist, but if you do put them in public school, you're an uncaring & negligent parent.
- If you don't go to college, you will probably not amount to much.
- If you don't have a significant other, you will never be happy.

You see, culture plays off your guilty feelings trying to manipulate your behavior. BTW if you have no guilt then you are pathological and suffer from social maladaptive behavior and you need to run, not walk, to psychiatric help. The truth behind that is that **we all have sin in our lives**:

Psalm 51:5 ESV

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalm 58:3 ESV

The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.

That sin that we are born with leaves us with guilt and then culture picks up on that feeling and uses what you already have (**a guilty conscience**) to **manipulate** you to do what they want you to do. And because you have guilt it produces a desire to do something **to save yourself!** You desire release, you know if you could but get that monkey off your back many things in your life would change (**example of my brother**).

This reality though sets up our culture for the ultimate question pretty well, **“What must you do to be saved?”** Fortunately for us, that is exactly what the Bible answers.

Acts 16:30-31 ESV



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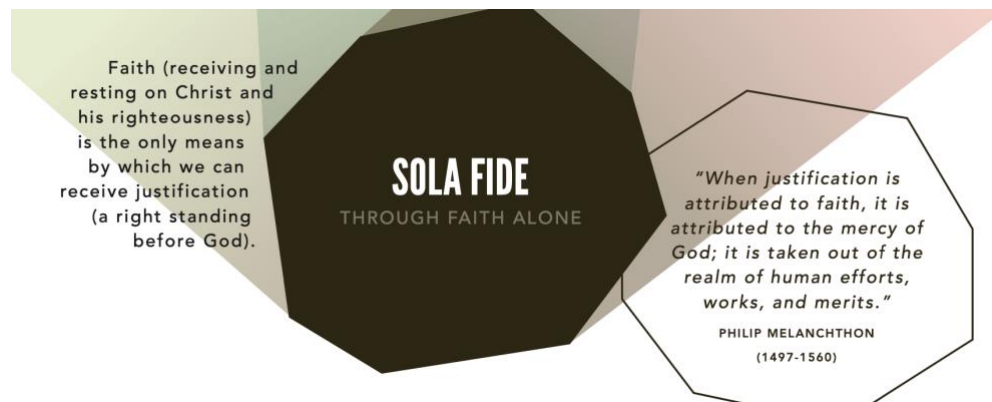
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Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ And they said, “**Believe** in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

You believe, (πιστεύω (*pisteuō*)). vb. **to believe, trust; entrust¹ in something already shown to be reliable**) that is you have **Faith ‘IN’** the Lord Jesus alone to **take guilt** and deliver you into eternal life, living right now without fear! The Jailer here in Acts 16 was struck with the enormous amount of guilt that he had jailed and would even help in the execution of Paul and Silas. He had been ready to kill himself in fear that they had escaped and now he sees that they cared enough for him that they gave up their location so he would not harm himself. It was a sacrifice of their freedom for his life. The jailer knows in an instant he must be saved, and the answer came in the blink of an eye. BELIEVE!

The release of guilt for this man, led him to take Paul and Silas to his house where his whole home was converted and baptized. **Faith IS the release of GUILT.** Something happens when someone believes...



Calvin noted that if we remove the knowledge of this doctrine that, *“The glory of Christ is extinguished, religion is abolished, the church destroyed, and the hope of salvation utterly overthrown.”*² – **John Calvin**

FAITH:

- **Belief that God is Just.**

¹ Fenlason, A. C. (2014). [Belief](#). D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

² Henry Beveridge, ed., *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, Volume I, 1844.



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- Belief that Jesus is Righteous.
- Belief you are a Sinner.
- Believe that only Jesus can do what must be done to remove one's Guilt.
= JUSTIFICATION by FAITH ALONE

1. The True Need of being Justified!

Exodus 23:7

“Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked.”

Acquit - tsadak (sawdak) to declare not guilty as in a court of law.

- Grace is not acquittal for God can't do that. -

There is a need to be justified. (*Illustration* - my experience with the court system when I was 19). I was justified by the court, my guilt was assuaged, and I believed what the judge told me, not guilty!

Our whole legal system is built around the pursuit of Justice because Justice is a universal desire and need. The whole reason that there is a story after Genesis 3 going all the way to Revelation is built on an unchanging characteristic of God/JUSTICE. **Our God is a just God from which no one can run!** Deuteronomy 32:4 (you read it on Friday) Moses speaks this reminder to his people:

Deuteronomy 32:4 ESV

The Rock, his work is perfect,
for all his ways are justice.

A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
just and upright is He.

All of God's ways are perfect and when we choose not to be perfect it invokes God to take action, for with perfection comes Perfect Justice.

[WHAT IS JUSTIFICATION]

The Baptist Catechism

Question 37: What is justification?



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Answer: Justification is an act of God’s free grace, by which he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

Scripture: Romans 3:24; 5:19; Ephesians 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9; Galatians 2:16.

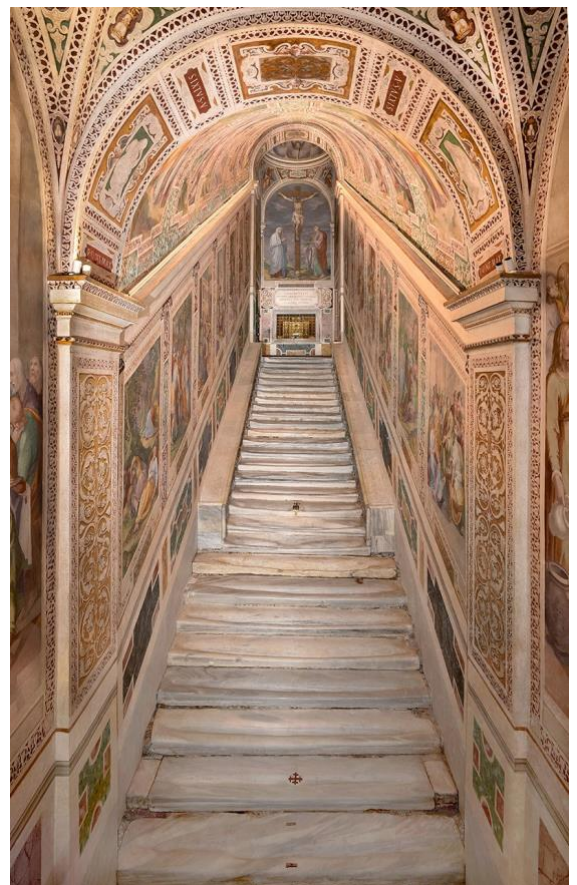
Justification is a pardon in form of A DECREE, a release from sins and all the effects and ALL future grievances based on the grace of a judge. Leaving the courtroom as if it never happened.

The desire for pardon is what got **Luther fixated** on the scripture; this is what drove him crazy! **Is that what drives us CRAZY?!** And God uses that feeling of desiring a pardon to drive us to the Word too.

Luther battled with a false doctrine (Catholic). Luther was taught that God called him into the Kingdom by infant baptism BUT it was up to Luther to keep in the good graces of God making sure he observed all the sacraments AND that he contributed to His Grace. **He was taught that to keep His Salvation he must add to his merit, his worth!**

[LUTHER]

- November 1510 Luther travels to Rome; 5 years into his monk journey.
 - Viewed all the holy relics to increase his merit; add to grace
 - Went to mass all the time in the Holy City repeating the “Pater Noster” the Lord’s Prayer constantly
 - Crawled on his hands and knees up the steps of the “*Scala Sancta*” (Pilate’s Palace) while saying the Lord’s Prayer on every step and upon reaching the top says, “Who knows whether it is so?” **AM I JUSTIFIED YET!?**





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- In 1511 he's transferred to Wittenberg, Germany to a monastery where he would spend up to 6 hours a day in confession.
- Next, He began to study the German mystics that taught the practice of pacifist living (total surrender of self to the world).
- It all drove him deeper into depression and upon reflection said, *“I myself more than once driven to the very abyss of despair so that I wished I had never been created. Love God? I hated Him!” - Luther*

Again, it wasn't until God broke through Luther's Rebellious heart, through Scripture, that Luther saw how a man was to be justified, to find release, to find pardon!

Romans 1:17 ESV

“For in it (Gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written. ‘The righteous shall live by faith’.”

So, what happened when Luther read Romans 1? What ignited empty and meaningless ink on pages to become the roaring fires of Luther's heart that propelled him to bring the light of the Gospel to a world lost in religion? Luther discovered the way to be Justified, to have release, to get the monkey off his back, to be free!

[TEXT]

2. Faith - it delivers Justification!

Gal. 2:15-16 ESV

¹⁵We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; ¹⁶yet we know that a person is **not justified by works** of the law but **through faith** in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be **justified by faith** in Christ and **not by works of the law**, because by works of the law no one will be **justified**.

Let's take into serious consideration that for a Jew (Paul) and the Jewish converts he was writing here to abandon the Law was a big thing! **It's turning their back on what they thought could always save them!** But what Paul and these Galatians learned and had to be continually reminded was that the law cannot save you.



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Here’s why they left Judaism - Law was given to root out a problem but it cannot save you. Works cannot save you, they cannot JUSTIFY YOU. But the need for Justification continues!

Law is like our tax code. You are born and soon you must work, and you will constantly owe the state and it is not until you are dead can you stop owing. It will never matter how much you make, you can’t out give the tax code for the code demands that you always pay. **As a matter of fact, the more you pay and contribute to your country the more you owe according to the code.** Our tax code, as silly as it sounds, mirrors God’s law. You can’t ever outgive the tax code!

God’s law holds no exemptions for those it covers. The only way to escape the penalty of law is abandon trying to be justified by it. **We have to leave the system in which we were born like the Galatians! – Here’s How:**

[JESUS]

Romans 3:22-25 ESV

“²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are **justified** by his **grace** as a **gift**, through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a **propitiation** by his blood, to be received by **faith**...”

Forgiveness of our sins; *the conscious choices we make to be a part of this world, that which brings us GUILT*, are justified by the action of redemption, **that’s a one-time payment**, and we are bought out of this world. If you could use again the example of a tax code, we receive a tax exemption status that can never be lost.

Most Christians know this part of the story, the cross, the sacrifice, is what buys us back. We have traded citizenship with the world and have moved on to God’s Kingdom, where there are no more tax codes.

But being Justified here is a two-step process there is a redemption to be made and there is a call for a substitution.



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The Father puts forward Jesus – propitiation - in our place - so that His life would cover the need for any penalties owed **and when placed forward Jesus not only sacrifices His life but gives us His right standing with God.**

Now for many of us in here, and you may even be ex-Catholic, in your evangelical upbringing there is a good chance you did not learn this well. Because again it is easy to say but it is hard to accept. We like Luther want to believe that if we can make ourselves miserable enough, we might earn God’s grace. **We were bought with a price and if we really loved Jesus then we would try hard to earn that love. But that’s not the Gospel,** that is not faith alone, that is the curse that Luther was under.

Our fight for Faith is to fight the belief that we have to earn being loved!? Romans 3 said all I have to do is believe it! By faith alone means, that I receive it BUT I need to receive the whole thing. Some of us in here right now for what I am about to say have never heard this next part before.

2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Jesus in being our propitiation (Romans 3:25)-in our place- upon offering Himself **not only** takes our sin on Himself but gives us here according to 2 Corinthians His **RIGHTEOUSNESS. This is what Luther called the Great Exchange, in the theological world we call this Imputation.**

HERES’ THE MAIN POINT TODAY:

JUSTIFICATION by FAITH ALONE

means

You BELIEVE - He took your sin, and you received His righteousness.

No need for additional Penance!

3. The Glorious Beauty of how Justification works!

The Gospel is then, when we believe by Faith, that my standing with God can never change!



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It means, **WE CANNOT BE ACCUSED ANYMORE**, even if my morality is not perfected yet.

It means when I pray and confess my sins, we can admit our wrongs to God and each other and **plead Jesus’ Merits** not our own, and **IT MUST BE ACCEPTED**.

We grow in holiness and goodness every day because of who we have been made into, **ALL not by guilt!** Guilt has always been used by the church for behavior control just as much as the culture (as in our question sin the beginning), it is our go to whipping post for our people. **What would happen in this church if we all believed we are righteous!?**

Let’s clear all this up and be assured as we bring this to an end.

If Justification is a process, then how would we know when we arrived?

If Justification is earned, then when are we ever sure we have done enough?

If it is a process and if it is earned, then I will continue to suffer in guilt until I think I have reached it.

BUT If Justification is a **Declaration of God**, based on **His Justice & Faithfulness**, then that also means my Right Standing never changes because God is eternal.

SO - Because it was not earned, GUESS WHAT, it can never be unearned!

Romans 8:30 ESV

³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

All of those things, standings, those decrees over us, you and I lack the power to remove for they were not done by us, **they were done by God!**

Christianity, the elect, the covenant community, is the only religion that offers Eternal Security through Justification by Faith, therefore it is the only path that offers true hope!



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This is why, it is so important as we have learned from our forefathers **that it is by Faith Alone *Sola Fide* that we are justified**, so that no one but God can boast...

Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

The glorious beauty of Justification by Faith is that it is NOT EARNED, but it is FREELY GIVEN not on the basis of your works, **but CHRIST’S**. And because you are not in control of it, once you have it, you can’t get rid of it (like type 1 diabetes). There is nothing we can do about our condition of being born in sin and there is nothing we can do about being born again; the Spirit goes where it wants...

[CHALLENGE]

Today we all need to realize we have a need to be justified because we all have the need to be rid of guilt. Perhaps you are fooling yourself with something you do to make you feel like you are ok with God. You give to charity, you pay more than a tithe, you spoil your kids, you mow your neighbors grass, all of these things are good but if you are doing them to justify yourself with God then they are a waste of time. Believe today not in what you can do to make God love you more but believe that God was pleased enough with Jesus to pardon all your sins.

Maybe you’re the opposite of this, your guilt drives you to punish yourself. You neglect your health, you have a problem enjoying life, you are a depressed individual because you believe you need to make penance. The Gospel says we were made the “righteousness” of God, there is now no condemnation no penance to be made. Today would you believe you are free from your burden of sin and enjoy your freedoms?

Lastly, if you have never received your pardon, the decree of not guilty, then as the Jailer in Acts 16 believe that:

- **Jesus is Righteous, you are a Sinner and only He can remove your Guilt. Ask Him to do this for you today to take your sins and give you His righteousness, and believe in His name.**



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[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that has decreed His people “NOT GUILTY” and enforces that ruling eternally.

Go in the name of the Son, that receives our sin and gives us His righteousness eternally.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that grants us Faith to believe the Gospel, and gives us the power to share that good news with others.