



“The Reformation / A Celebration of Historical Perseverance”

5 Solas wk. 3 – Sola Gratia

By Pastor Jody May 11/07/2021

Romans 11:5-6 ESV

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.

Ephesians 1:4-5 ESV

even as he **chose us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love⁵ he predestined us for **adoption** to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the **purpose** of his **will**,

Ephesians 2:4-10 ESV

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by **grace** you have been **saved**—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.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.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Romans 3:23-25 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. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

1 Corinthians 15:10 ESV

But by the **grace** of God I am what I am, and his **grace** toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the **grace** of God that is with me.

[CONNECT/INTRO]

Sola Scriptura = Scripture Alone has the authority to declare our eternal state.



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Sola Fide = Faith Alone is how we are justified and made right by God.

Main Point for today!

Sola Gratia = By Grace Alone are we saved!

Sola Gratia = Grace Alone answers the question, “Does the human will have the capacity to believe and obey those first two statements?” – (See Diagram)



J.I. Packer gives us a clue as to how this works with faith, “The principle of ‘Sola Fide’ is not rightly UNDERSTOOD till it is seen as anchored in the broader principle of ‘Sola Gratia’.”

What we will discover today is why the declaration “Sola Gratia” was so important to Luther and the Reformers during the 16th century. Luther declared Sola Gratia as the “**hinge on which all turns**”. **Will Christianity be a religion based on the ability for human beings to earn Merit or is God the sole case for our Salvation?**

I am going to let Louis Berkhoff answer this question and he can state what I believe and what I want you to walk away from today.

“Grace is the unmerited goodness or love of God to those who have forfeited it, and are by nature under a sentence of condemnation.” – Louis Berkhoff (1873-1957)

Grace – getting what you don’t deserve...

Today while that all sounds good **let me tell you why** it is still important to emphasize Grace Alone as much as you can, in preaching and in speaking the Gospel to one another.

Many believe, especially in westernized culture that we are all a byproduct of our environment. That when a person is provided the right environment, the right upbringing, that person can develop into a good person. This is right now the **accepted psychological norm of our country**. This belief though has added to a



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very pervasive and epidemic philosophical sickness that is eroding stability in our communities at a local and national level.

What this has contributed to is the belief that when life does not work out the way you want it to, there must be someone or something to blame. Because if you had the proper environment and support that you needed, you would make the right decisions, you would not be enticed to make bad ones, meaning **YOU are a VICTIM!** You were born good, and if someone had not messed with you then your life all would be ok! **VICTIMIZATION is the new SALVATION for the 22nd century,** you are to blame someone else for the way you are!

This new doctrine of Salvation is actually, the repackaging of a 5th century heresy called **Pelagianism**. Pelagius was a monk that was sick and tired of people using the excuse, “well I’m only human” to live a life of spiritual laziness. Therefore, he began to teach that you had a choice to be bad or good upon birth. That teaching goes against scripture: Psalm 51:5, 58:3 (we were born sinners), and all of Pauline theology as we see in Romans 5:

Rom. 5:

- “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned” (verse 12).
- “many died through one man’s trespass” (verse 15).
- “the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation” (verse 16).
- “because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man” (verse 17).
- “one trespass led to condemnation for all men” (verse 18).
- “by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners” (verse 19).

You see Pelagius...¹

Pelagius and his false doctrine were fought by [Augustine](#)² and condemned by the [Council of Carthage](#) in AD 418, the same year that Pelagius was excommunicated. Because it goes against the biblical doctrine of [Original Sin](#). Pelagianism did not disappear, however, and had to be condemned again by the [Council of Ephesus](#)(431) and later church councils. Pelagianism survives to this day and shows up in any teaching that says following Christ

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Pelagianism.html>

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/Saint-Augustine.html>



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is primarily a choice we make apart from any supernatural intervention of God’s grace. **In any age and in any form, Pelagianism is unscriptural and should be rejected.**

What I am asking of this body is never be deceived, to believe that it is by your strength you are being saved, give God the credit for your Salvation alone! To help us all do that today we will look at those passages again from our reading this morning and discuss four parts of Salvation that are brought to you all by **GRACE ALONE!**:

[TEXT] + [JESUS]

1. Election, God chooses by Grace Alone!

Romans 11:5-6 ESV

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.

Remnant *λεῖμμα (leimma)*. n. neut. **residue, remnant**. *The small part that is left after most is removed.*³= there was then and has always been a small amount of people preserved who actually had faith, believing they were justified by God alone. This certain remnant in this verse is a very small number of Jewish people who at this time had been saved by faith, they had accepted that Jesus was their Messiah. The only reason any of them were saved to faith for faith was all based on God’s Grace alone, “*chosen by grace.*” The Covenant of works was done.

The **only way any of us are preserved**, the only way the church endures through the centuries, the only way you and I will reach our rendezvous with God in the end is ‘**IF**’ **God chooses to do so** by Grace Alone. No one has ever made it on their works BUT Christ, so we should be very thankful for this wonderful gift of grace.

There’s another amazing thing about this grace and that is **WHEN** did God chose to give us what we don’t deserve.

³ Brown, P. (2014). [Remnant](#). D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



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Ephesians 1:4-5 ESV

even as he **chose us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for **adoption** to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the **purpose** of his **will**,

By Grace alone we are chosen before time (*foundation of the world* v. 4) to be holy and blameless. He does this through another part of the Salvation process, **Adoption** (v.5). God elects by Grace, before time, to adopt us, to give us His name, to allow us to see as His family what only Jesus had seen. We too one day will be glorified in a new body like our Lord’s because we are His family now. Grace alone brings you in, adoption, and it is by Grace that you stay in.

The work of election by Grace also means that no matter who you are in contrast with other Christians you have the same standing as they do in all things, because all were brought in the same way by adoption, not by works or it is no longer grace, (Rom. 10). **Everyone is next in line behind Jesus!**

ALL STILL SIN, and no one is better than anyone else and because of Jesus all get equal opportunities to be next to dad! This is a dream come true!

Election by Grace is what makes you a “**lighthouse**” for God because it doesn’t take credit for the changes that are happening in you. Election is what fills the Christian with joy for that person knows what it was to once be lost and then be found. Election is what calls people to come and see what God is doing for it is not by your work but His. Election makes you boast in Him alone!

Election empowers personal evangelism!

“Election demonstrates that we are saved by Grace Alone and empowers us to extend God’s Grace to others.”

Election established by Grace Alone is another area where the reformers had to go to battle but this time not with the Catholic church but with other reformers. **John Calvin** is noted to be the man to lead in the pursuit of teaching the doctrine of Election or more commonly known as **Predestination**. In 1551 Calvin was attacked by a man named Jerome Bolsec, labeled a heretic, which made Calvin one more time rewrite his now famous **Institutes** providing multiple chapters to prove through scripture the Doctrine of Grace Alone. This prepared the church to stand against heresy in the early 1600s.



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At the *Synod of Dort* 1618-1619, in response to Arminian heresy, theologians based on Calvin’s work on predestination, the church came up with acronym **TULIP** in response to a 5 point argument proclaiming you can resist God and lose Salvation. This acronym explains the glory of God’s Sovereignty in all of Salvation, not just election. This teaching becomes the foundation for both Presbyterians and Baptists for generations helping produce both the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647 and the LBCF of 1689 which has kept HCC clear of slipping into Pelagianism and Arminianism which has weakened the church severely in our land.

To be saved by Grace Alone means we must accept that Election is God’s Grace poured out on man, and **without it none would be saved.**

And because of our Election before time, to de adopted heirs we receive the greatest of all inheritances (**Regeneration**)!

2. Regeneration is possible by Grace Alone!

Ephesians 2:4-10 ESV

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were **dead in our trespasses**, made us alive together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 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. ¹⁰ For we are his **workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for **good works**, which God prepared **beforehand**, that we should walk in them.

Paul makes this intellectual interjection in v.5 – *by grace you have been saved* - why does he put it there? To show the importance of **God’s Grace because that is what made you ALIVE being, “dead in our trespasses”!** God while you and I are still dead, has already decided to **SAVE US!** The theological term for making one spiritually alive is called **REGENERATION.**

Regeneration is given to us to show us and to show the world, to glorify God, by showing how much God loves us! Not just the act of Regeneration alone but God



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desires to show us more (**v.7 in the coming ages**), God **WANTS** to give more, He wants to pour out blessings for eternity and the only way you get that is you must be made alive! So, **Regeneration is not just the end goal, as glorious as it is, it is only the beginning!**

So, before I go further, **I want to make sure you heard me say that Regeneration is just the beginning and that there is a purpose for it.** We are not the sole-end of Salvation, our rescuing is not the end-goal, believing we were ONLY saved just to escape hell and get an eternal vacation in heaven is not the finale!

We were called for the purpose - to do “good works!” (V.10), I am *His Workmanship* made for *Good Works*. Good works that are to be *walked out* (v.10). So, part of the Gracious gift of Regeneration is that I would discover that **true joy is found when I walk out good works living for Jesus!** Living a life of Grace alone means I am realizing my God has called me out of darkness into marvelous light where I get to spend eternity proclaiming His goodness through the work I will perform!

God’s Word says the reward is the work, which means all that I do has value, it contributes to what Christ is doing. Work is no longer a curse as given in Genesis it is a blessing restored by Christ’s work.

By Grace alone are you saved, and it is by Grace that we have been Regenerated to an eternal life living for our God!

Brings us to the third part today because Regeneration by Grace Alone brings you into what all men need (**Atonement**).

3. Atonement happens by Grace Alone!

Romans 3:23-25 ESV

²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his **grace** as a **gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be **received by faith**. This was to show God’s **righteousness**, because in his **divine forbearance** he had passed over former sins.

First, Grace is the “*gift*” (v.23) and **ATONEMENT** (being redeemed by faith believing Jesus was your propitiation) now that’s what’s underneath the



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wrapping. **Faith, what we learned about last week, is the catcher’s mitt for Grace; it receives it (v.25).** Doug Wilson calls Faith the Spiritual hands of the Christian, without Faith you can’t receive anything. Grace is a wild curve ball unless God has given us the gift of Faith first.

God’s gift of grace **IS** atonement, according to v.25. The gift of GRACE also shows God’s Righteousness.

We said last week that when we are Justified by Faith we must believe – 1st God is Just, 2nd We are Sinners, and 3rd Jesus is Righteous. The gift of GRACE delivers Faith and with faith we see that the **(Law) condemns our deeds but Grace commends God’s righteousness.** By Grace we see what we have done wrong, and **we see** what the **Son** has done **RIGHT, it shows the son’s righteousness** (v.25)!

Atonement by Grace alone is dependent on what Jesus has done alone otherwise we are doomed! Here’s why.

v.25 the ‘*divine forbearance*’ – **From GENESIS**, without God looking forward, to when Grace would be delivered on the cross and found solely in Christ’s work, the line of Adam would have been obliterated because of the demand for justice! **God’s justice demands payment, and WE were not able to give it! So, by Grace God waits to exact justice in Jesus as Messiah**, because there were **more** children to adopt, to call, that He had elected, so justice was held back until all His children all brought home.

Because, of the “*proto evangel’ lion*” in **Genesis 3:15** His people were preserved until the price could be put forward in Christ. Again, Grace had to start with God’s decree of how and when he would pay to show His justice and righteousness.

Because of Grace, through *divine forbearance*, your children are now preserved so that by God’s grace they are regenerated based on God’s grace of election. Because of Grace, God will wait until all of His children are brought in and it all is based on the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Atonement happens by Grace alone, for you cannot atone for anything, and the promise of atonement is sustained by God alone for only He is eternally faithful!



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And because atonement will be delivered to all those called it initiates that which will sustain us (**Sanctification**).

4. Sanctification, we are preserved Grace Alone!

1 Corinthians 15:10 ESV

But **by the grace of God I am what I am**, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

Work without Grace is merely refinement of oneself, BUT, Work + Grace = Sanctification. Paul claims that his life is different because God’s Work in Him is something he does not deserve, but it’s there, AND it’s changing him!

IN CONTRAST - Hard work without the influence of the HS in my life leads to self-idolatry. We are shown an example of that in Genesis 11 with the tower of Babel. Their work to be noticed was to show God that they could build themselves up, but instead of having dominion over the earth they were erecting a sign of their superiority.

We often fall into the same trap always trying to show God and the world we are worthy, we have merit! Until we see God’s Spirit as a necessary ingredient, we will try to add to our name to make us mean more in this earth. By not embracing Sanctification by Grace Alone we are agreeing with the world that **Salvation comes through our works.**

Here’s the TRUTH - My working without the constant reminders, correction, discipline, and conviction of God’s Spirit in my life probably would have found me divorced, trying to fulfill my dreams while being depressed and lonely.

Even for Christ, when upon this earth, as a perfect man, He still pulled Himself away to allow His Father to make His paths straight, to reflect on scripture and to plead the Father have His way in His life. And in Luke 2 He grew in His stature and in favor with God and man. The Spirit of God working in JESUS!



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Because sanctification is based on Christ’s perfect life let us realize when we fail that too will be used in God’s preserving work in my life. Failure and success both bring Glory to God. Failure and success both bring strengthening. Failure and success both bring learning. **I don’t sweat my failures anymore because God values making Christ known more, therefore he makes sure no event in my life is ever wasted! By Grace alone, God uses all in my life to change my life for the better!**

In closing here’s what living by Grace Alone does for us:

By Grace alone through the **gift of Election** we know that we all belong to a family that together **bears the weight to shine in the world for Christ**. Perhaps today you need to embrace the family that God has chosen for you to be with, HCC, and start working with them towards sharing God’s glory with those of us around here. Remember embracing the gift of Election empowers your work of Evangelism.

By Grace alone through God’s **gift of Regeneration** we can begin to see that God has always loved you and **wants more for your life than you ever wanted for yourself**. Today we all need to look past what this life holds for us and understand 1st we were called to more than what this temporary physical world offers and secondly our life extends past this physical life for eons. What is that you need to surrender today and take up the mantle of an eternal daughter/son that God has bestowed upon you?

By Grace alone through the **gift of Atonement** of Jesus you don’t have to justify yourself anymore, but can know that you are saved be proud and **declare His perfect sacrifice and not your attempts at works**. Today let us put forth the extra effort and pray for our lost loved ones for God saves all people the same way, by grace, let’s redouble our efforts on behalf of the lost.

By Grace alone through the **gift of Sanctification** you know that God will preserve you until the end making sure **we don’t get wrapped up in works by our hands promoting self-idolatry**. Today, don’t be too discouraged by sin, but be empowered when God shows you your sin, for that is by grace so that too can continually work towards becoming more like Christ.



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Let us all celebrate and thank God again today that by Grace alone wea all are saved...

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that has graciously lavished upon us grace upon grace because we are His children.

Go in the name of the Son, that graciously shares with us His standing with the Father.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes to God’s glory increasing our affections, empowering our sanctification and evangelistic efforts.