

Doctrines of the Reformation
Sola Fide - By Faith Alone
Ephesians 2:8-9

**Justification is by grace alone
through faith alone
because of Christ Alone**

In 1515, while reading the Scripture, Luther was struck by **Romans 1:16, 17** *For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile, This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, “The righteous will live by faith.”* The last is a quote from Habakkuk 2:4
He came to understand the system of works for salvation that was tormenting his soul, was not the message of scripture at all, but man is justified and saved by faith alone. **Sola fide**. His tormented soul was at last set free. Luther wrote, **“At that moment I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise.”** No doctrine is more important to evangelical theology than the doctrine of justification by faith alone—the Reformation principle of sola fide. Martin Luther rightly said **“the church stands or falls on this one doctrine.”**

I. Historical Understanding

The Westminster Larger Catechism defines justification as “an act of God’s free grace unto sinners, in which he forgives all their sins, accepted and accounted their persons righteous in his sight; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ, by God imputed to them, and received by faith alone”

Forgiveness is the subtraction of that which is sinful from your record.

Justification is the addition of that which is righteous to your record.

II. It does not mean

1. It does not mean that **FAITH** saves. Faith is only as good as its object. To focus on our faith would lead to pride and arrogance
Romans 3:22 Galatians 2:16
2. It does not mean that we will do no good works

Biblical Christianity is distinct from every other religion in that it is centered on what God has accomplished through Christ’s finished work, while all other religions are based on human achievement.

Romans 4:4-5 *When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. ⁵ But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners.*

James say faith without works is dead

Paul told Titus that God created us as a people who were zealous to do good works **Titus 2:14**

III. It is clearly scriptural - Read **Romans 3:28-30, 4:5, 5:1, 9:30, 10:4, 11:6, Galatians 2:16, 2:21, 3:5-6, 24, Ephesians 2:8-9, Philippians 3:8-9**

Summary of Truth

1. Based on God’s grace **Romans 3:24** and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
2. Grounded in the blood of Christ **Romans 5:9** *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!*
3. Not according to our works **Romans 4:5** *However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.*
4. Through faith alone **Romans 3:28** *For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.*

Questions we need to ask ourselves

1. *For my salvation, do I rely by faith on the Lord Jesus Christ alone?*
2. *Do I depend on myself as well (your good life, prayers, going to church, and so on)?*
3. *Do I rely by faith in someone else apart from Christ (parents, the saints, or the church)?*
4. *If I rely by faith in Christ alone, is there evidence that my faith is real? Is it the kind of "faith working through love" or is it dead, a mere profession devoid of good works?*



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