**The FIVE SOLAS – Sola Gratia - Grace alone**

**Few things stir the heart to worship than today's Sola.**

**And also, few things stir controversy as much as todays.**

**(Our core passage) Ephesians 2:1** **And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**

**4 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.**

**A great declarations of today’s Sola.**

**The Five Solas: 5 Core Truths – 5 basic principles. Sola = Latin for only**

1. **Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone) – The authority**
2. **Solus Christus (Christ alone) - The mediator**
3. **Sola Gratia (Grace alone) – The means**
4. **Sola Fide (Faith alone) – The activation**
5. **Soli Deo Gloria (God’s glory alone) – The goal**

**The five Solas guard and clarify the gospel. The order is often different. I chose an order that builds a foundation.**

**Today Sola Gratia (Grace Alone). By far the most controversial. Nothing is more debated in Christianity than our role in salvation.**

**Martin Luther (1483–1546) put it clearly: “But no man can be thoroughly humbled until he knows that his salvation is utterly beyond his own powers, devices, endeavors, will, and works, and depends entirely on the choice, will, and work of another, namely, of God alone… then he has come close to grace, and can be saved.”**

**Every attempt to add to our salvation through human efforts is a corruption of this Sola. The purity of the Gospel hangs on this.**

**Sola Gratia (Grace Alone) – God, by his infinite love and mercy, has alone accomplished everything necessary for one's salvation.**

**Grace = God’s unmerited and undeserved favor and kindness.**

**When you read/think grace – think of God’s undeserved favor.**

**Thus, why it is called Amazing Grace!**

**Some view grace as a “*quid pro quo”* arrangement. God did his part, now I must do my part. This is the opposite of grace.**

**Sola Gratia: God alone draws, convicts, and saves; God gets the credit from start to finish.**

**By grace alone, spiritually dead sinners under the just and holy wrath of God are redeemed by the death of Christ and made alive in Christ so that God is 100% for them - Forever!**

**Let’s unpack Sola Gratia using Ephesians 2 - First of all:**

**\*\* We can’t know how great God’s grace is until we understand how great our sin is**

**We can’t grasp the good news until we understand the bad news. The first thing Paul does (Rom 1-4 does the same thing).**

**Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, (led by the world's sinful pursuits) following the prince of the power of the air, (led by demonic spirits) the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience (led by a rebellious nature) - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, (led by our own selfish wants) carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, (led by our physical lusts and thoughts) and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (The wrath of God awaits all apart from salvation)**

**\*\* We were helpless, hopeless, doomed, and dead.**

**We spent a lot of time on this last week (review).**

**Born Spiritually Dead - Eph 2:1,5; 1 Cor 1:18, 21-24, 2:14; 2 Cor 2:15-16, 4:3-4; Deut 29:2-4; Psalm 119:18; Pro 4:19; Isaiah 42:6-7; Hosea 14:9; Matt 16:17; John 3:27, 8:43, 6:44,65, 14:16-17; Acts 22:14, 26:18; Eph 4:17-19; 1 John 5:20; Phil 2:13.**

**Born Slaves to sin - John 8:34; 2 Pet 2:19; Titus 3:3; Gal 4:8-9; Rom 6:6-20; 7:14; 2 Tim 2:25-26; Isaiah 42:6-7; Psalm 51:12; John 8:31-32,36; 2 Co 3:17.**

**Born with completely Perverted desires - Rom 1:24-2, 7:18; Eph 2:3; Pro 21:10; John 3:19, 8:44; Titus 1:15-16; Isaiah 1:5-6, Psalm 51:5.**

**Born at war with God - John 3:20, Rom 1:28-30, 8:7-8; Rom 5, Col 1:21; James 4:4; Psalm 58:3; Eph 2:3, 12-13.**

**No one is good - 2 Chron 6:36; Micah 7:2-4; Rom 1:28-31, 3:10-23, 5:12-14; 1 John 1:8,10; Matt 15:19, Mark 7:21-23, 10:18; Luke 18:19; Psalm 5:9, 143:2; Isaiah 53:6; 1 Kings 8:46; 116:11, 130:3, 143:2; Pro 10:20, 20:9, 28:26; Ecc 7:20, 9:3; Jer 2:29, 10:7-8,14, 17:9; 1 Cor 5:9-10; James 3:2; Gen 6:5, 8:21; Titus 1:15-16; Eph 4:17-18.**

**Everyone is under judgment**

**Deut 4:24, 9:3, 2 Sam 22:9, Isaiah 33:14, Heb 12:29, Rom 1:18, John 3:36**

**Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.**

**In the face of a holy, perfect, and righteous God; the sinful knowingly reject God and are consumed like a fire in his presence.**

**Good news – God is good – There is salvation! Last wk Sola Christus.**

**Act 4:12 There is salvation… Jesus Christ alone is the way to the Father.**

**John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.**

**Sin is the primary problem – Jesus is the only solution.**

**However, there is still another dilemma…**

**No One seeks God - Psalm 10:4, 14:1-3, 53:1-3; John 3:20; Isa 64:7; 65:1; Rom 3:10-12.**

**Romans 3:10 “None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”**

**Romans 8:7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**

**We were strutting on our way to damnation, and we couldn’t care less.**

**We are spiritually blind - Can’t see or understand, even if we wanted to.**

**1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.**

**2 Corinthians 4:3** **And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

**People dead in sin, do not want God or desire God – their hearts are in complete rebellion w/ God.**

**Without grace (God’s favor), no one will know or desire him.**

**We are not just sick, we are dead - unresponsive with no abilities. Drag a drowned body onto the beach… (What can a dead man do to save himself?) A person flatlines on a hospital bed… A person pulled out of a car after a collision… what part do they play? What can a dead man do to save his life? Nothing – he is unresponsive.**

**Eph 2:1-3 – We were helpless, hopeless, and doomed and dead.**

**If salvation was in Hawaii, and all we had to do was swim there. Some might be better than others – but we are all sunk! No matter how hard or good you swim (longest non-stop swim is 317 miles in Yukon River. It’s 2500 miles from CA to HI, plus the waves, the storms, and sea life). We’ll never make it. We are doomed.**

**Look at the next part, Eph 2:4 But God, (two of the greatest English words - Praise God for the buts in the Bible!) 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…**

**\*\* We were made alive by God’s grace alone.**

**Thank you, God!– to the praise of his glorious grace! (Eph 1:6)**

**Let’s take a closer look at the power of God’s grace.**

**GOD’s GRACE: chose**

**Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, (His great wealth of infinite mercy) because of the great love with which he loved us, (His extravagant great love)…**

**God, out of his great love and mercy - chose from all eternity to save a people for himself. Not my our merit – but his favor.**

**Ephesians 1:4 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, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.**

**John 15:16 - You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide…**

**Those who are saved – are chosen by God. “But doesn’t my will and choice determine it?” Not according to Paul.**

**Rom 9:15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.” 16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.**

**Many Christians believe they are sinful and that grace is necessary, but they don’t believe evil has so corrupted our will as to make us morally unable to choose Jesus. (previous verses)**

**John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood (by family or race) nor of the will of the flesh (by our will) nor of the will of man, (by the will of others in our life; parents/spouse) but of God. (Born again by the will of God)**

**Thinking, it is up to us to decide - in effect, makes us the ultimate arbiter. Remember, what can a dead man do? Stink.**

**\*\*\* Also, did God save you because you were worth it?**

**God did not save you because you are worth it – but because of His grace. If you were worthy of salvation – there was no grace.**

**Romans 11:5 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.**

**GOD’s GRACE: draws**

**John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. / 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. / John 6:65 Then Jesus said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless the Father has granted it to him."**

**John 8:47 Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”**

**John 10:26 …but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.**

**1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

**Remember we don’t seek him or want him - but God seeks us! Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”**

**If we are seeking Him - it is because he loved us first, chose us first, and sought us first.**

**GOD’s GRACE: empowers faith**

**Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God…**

**Next week! We are not saved by faith – we are saved by grace through faith. This is a God-given vehicle.**

**GOD’s GRACE: redeems**

**Eph 2:** **(But God) 5…made us alive together with Christ - by grace, you have been saved… 8 For by grace you have been saved…**

**While we were still helpless and dead - God made one alive.**

**Not By God and me / or by God with my help / or with God and church / or with God and a priest… but by God’s grace alone.**

**It is the grace of God that Christ would die on a sinner's cross for this sinner (last week’s message)**

**As David writes - Ps 3:8 - Salvation belongs to the LORD.**

**GOD’s GRACE: keeps**

**Eph 2: (But God) 5…made us alive (regeneration) together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— (redemption) 6 and raised us up with him (resurrection) and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (glorification) 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

**By grace, we are with Christ (3X). We are secure and resurrected and with him - as if it’s all already done.**

**If we think we play a part in attaining and keeping it, we are**

**“smuggling works into our salvation.” (Sproul) If a human can choose it or lose it – it is the work and will of a person – not God.**

**Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. (it is done and established by grace) 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, so that we should walk in them.**

**It is by grace alone - “so that” (3X)**

**v7 - So that God’s grace is on glorious display.**

**v9 - So that no one can take credit for it.**

**v10 - So that we will reflect this great grace to others.**

**From beginning to end, it is the LORD who keeps.**

**Romans 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined (election) he also called, (conviction) and those whom he called he also justified, (salvation) and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Glorification)**

**Before the foundation of the world – God’s grace (His loving kindness and mercy) alone was working in us.**

**John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. / 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.**

**John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (You are included in the “no one”)**

**From beginning to end, He calls us, saves us, and keeps us to the end. God gets all the credit. \* Phil 1:6 He who began a good…**

**To know this and hold this is to see your life transformed.**

**SOLA GRATIA at work in us.**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces humility**

**We had nothing to do with it. It’s not earned or deserved. Proud and arrogant Christians don’t understand the grace of God.**

**Why would He do this for anyone? His glorious Grace!**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces gratitude**

**Our only reasonable response is to fall on our knees in humility.**

**“Lord, why me? Why chose me? Why show me mercy? God, why me?**

**If one were to run into a blazing fire and carry me out and breathe life into my dead body – my response would not be, “Thanks, man.” \*\* What about if it was your daughter/son/wife? We would not just thumbs up and passively watch, complain about how load the fire trucks are, or fuss about the crowd space… We’d be overwhelmed with thankfulness. Thank you, I owe you my life!**

**How much more Jesus – who rescued us from the flames of eternal judgment! Understanding grace generates a heart of gratitude and praise!**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces joy**

**It tells me that I am fully loved and fully forgiven. And if the world rejects me, God accepts me.**

**His grace is enough in every circumstance!**

**What I have been given by God the world can’t take it away.**

**Song - This joy that I have – the world can’t take it away.**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces peace**

**Paul often opens his letters with - “Grace and peace to you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2).**

**Grace enables us to rest in the storms!**

**We can know God is working in our life even when we can’t see it regardless of the circumstance or outcome.**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces compassion**

**When we understand what we have been given, we can give it away.**

**We have grace, forgiveness, and compassion for others – overflowing from God’s grace given to us!**

* **A true understanding of Grace produces missional urgency**

**We are compelled by the overwhelming love of God to tell this to others – God is good, God is gracious, God is glorious!**

**1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 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 (because I have been given grace, I work hard to share it!), though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. (and even that is by God’s grace – all glory to God)**

**Sing Amazing Grace!**