

Introduction

- Faith is commanded of God's people and demonstrated in their lives throughout Scripture. The church had always believed that faith in Christ was required for salvation. However, over time it came to be believed that this faith must also be accompanied by God works which would further justify a person.

The reformers declared that the Scriptures proclaim the work of Christ alone for salvation. Any good works of mankind were incapable of obtaining salvation and therefore the only proper response to the Gospel was faith.

Understanding Sola Fide

Sola Fide is the belief that salvation comes not from looking at our own works of _____, but from looking outside of ourselves to the person and work of Christ.

- This view draws an intentional contrast with the Roman Catholic view in which good works must accompany faith so that justification is ultimately deserved or earned.

"If any one saith, that man is truly absolved from his sins and justified, because that he assuredly believed himself absolved and justified; or, that no one is truly justified but he who believes himself justified; and that, by this faith alone, absolution and justification are effected; let him be anathema."

- The Council of Trent, Canon XIV

What is meant by faith?

"There is no other honor equal to the estimate of truthfulness with which we honor him who we trust...[hence] the very highest worship of God is that we ascribe to him truthfulness, righteousness, and whatever else should be ascribed to one who is trusted." -Martin Luther, The Freedom of a Christian

"According to the simplest conception of it, faith is personal confidence in God." —Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology

Heb. 11:1-2—¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² For by it the people of old received their commendation.

➔ **Faith can therefore be defined as a confident trust in the _____.**

Theological Basis

1. The effects of _____:

⇒ **No human being comes to God on their own.** (John 6:44)

⇒ **No amount of good works that we could do could atone for our sin.** (Gal. 3:10-12)

Rom. 3:9b-18—For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written: "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." (Ps. 14:1-3) ¹³ "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." (Ps. 5:9) "The venom of asps is under their lips." (Ps. 140:3) ¹⁴ "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." (Ps. 10:7) ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known." (Prov. 1:16; 3:15-17) ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Ps. 36:1)

2. The _____ of the Triune God in our salvation:

⇒ **The Father planned and purposed our salvation.** (Eph. 1:3-6)

⇒ **The Son accomplished the substitutionary work necessary for our salvation.** (Heb. 10:10, 14)

⇒ **The Spirit reveals Christ to us so that we might respond in faith to the Gospel.** (John 16:12-15)

1 Pet. 1:1a-2a—To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion...according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

➔ **Faith is therefore the proper response of mankind to God's self-_____!**

Romans 3:21-26

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 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. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Important Observations

- The righteousness of God had previously been revealed most clearly through the OT _____ which was to be the rule of faith for His people. (3:21)
- Now, however, the righteousness of God has been revealed in _____ and made available to us through the message of the Gospel. (3:22)
 - “through”—διὰ (*dia*)—A marker of instrumentality or circumstance whereby something is accomplished or effected.
- The work of Christ is the only means by which anyone is ultimately declared _____. (3:23b-24)
 - ⇒ This is true of the OT saints as well because all have sinned and fallen short of God’s righteousness.
 - “redemption”—ἀπολύτρωσις (*apolytrōsis*)—Release from a captive condition.
- The work of Christ is closely associated with the _____ of the OT. (3:25a)
 - “propitiation”—ἱλαστήριον (*hilastērion*)—Relating to the appeasing, satisfying, or placating of God. Used of the cover of the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, which was sprinkled with the blood of the expiatory victim on the annual day of atonement.
- This demonstrates that the work of Christ was ultimately the means by which the OT saints were declared righteous before God. (3:25b).
- The _____ of Christ demonstrates both the righteousness of God as well as His _____.
 - ⇒ He remains _____ →
 - ⇒ He can declare just those who have _____ in Christ. →

The Example of Abraham—Romans 4:1-25

Questions for reflection:

How is *sola fide* related to the “good news” of the Gospel?

How does *sola fide* free me to lovingly serve both God and my neighbor?