

“SOLA GRATIA - Grace Alone”

Would Your Protest (Pt. 3)

October 15, 2017

INTRO ...500 yrs ago...

...How Does One Get Right with God?—How does one become Righteous???

“The Doctrine of JUSTIFICATION”

*I HAVE FOUND THAT THE vast majority of people who call themselves Protestants have no idea what they are protesting. ... Erasmus addressed the core issue of the Reformation, which was the question of how a sinner finds salvation in Christ. Luther asserted that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is the article upon which the church stands or falls. ... the formal cause of the Reformation was the question of Scripture, but the material cause was the question of justification.” R.C. Sproul, *Are We Together?* (p. 29). Kindle Edition.*

...Enter our Next 2 SOLA's: Sola Gratia—by Grace Alone ...Sola Fide—through Faith Alone

*“Luther fought the church not because it demanded too much, but because it demanded too little.” Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*” (quoted in “The Theology of the Reformers”, p. 53)*

- The sure give away that you have a low view of God is when you install a doorway of human works/contribution into the 'satisfaction' of God. —If God can be appeased or satisfied by our human contribution of righteousness, then that god has a low threshold of righteousness!

- To grasp the greatness of God—His purity, His righteousness, His utter Holiness is to be driven to “Sola Gratia—by Grace Alone”**
- To grasp the depravity of Man—Man's inability to 'self-generate' life, goodness, righteousness, faith, submission to God, repentance from our loyalty to sin/ourselves—is to be driven to “Sola Gratia—by Grace Alone”**

“Luther spoke almost invariably in sets of twos: law and gospel, wrath and grace, faith and works, flesh and spirit, ...freedom and bondage, God hidden and God revealed. Even when one side of these pairs is not expressly developed, it is always there by implication. Truth can only be arrived at by way of confrontation with contrasting truth. For example, we could not understand gospel were it not for law that reveals our inability to live rightly and thus points us to Christ. ...This way of thinking heightened the tension in Luther’s theology. Almost invariably Luther chose to live with the tension rather than dissolve the paradox.” **Timothy George**, *“The Theology of the Reformers”*, p. 62

But... Luther did what most 'works based righteousness' people won't do—he actually tried to do ALL in his power to make himself as right with God as a human possibly could!

Once we introduce 'Human Contribution', we also introduce the inescapable question of—“Have I contributed enough?” ...

“Penitent sinners were asked to show regret for their sins (contrition), confess them to a priest (confession), and do penitential work to atone for them (satisfaction).” **Dr. Eric Gritsch**, *Christianity Today*

- But Luther pondered serious and disturbing questions in EACH of these areas!

“Because only actual sins enumerated in confession could actually be forgiven, Luther was obsessed with the fear that he might have overlooked some sin. He would confess to Staupitz for hours, walk away, then come rushing back with some little foible he had forgotten to mention. At one point, Staupitz, quite exasperated, said, ‘Look here, brother Martin, if you’re going to confess so much, why don’t you go do something worth confessing. Kill your mother or father! Commit adultery! Quite coming in here with such flummery and fake sins!’ ...Luther was plagued with another doubt: ‘Have I been truly contrite in my confession, or is my repentance motivated merely by fear?’ **Timothy George**, *“The Theology of the Reformers”*, p. 65, 66

Driven to 'Anfechtung'!

Anfechtung – 'dread, despair, a sense of foreboding doom, an assault, anxiety.'

What may have made Luther's battle with 'aufechtung' more prominent was that **Medieval Life was lived 'in the Shadow of Death'**—

...**The 'mood of the day' had death lurking in the background.** ...so do everything in your power to secure eternal life! To secure your place on the day of judgment!

... the greatest thing Luther could do to make a contribution to his right standing with God was to **become a Monk**—

"Like everyone else in the Middle Ages he [Luther] knew what to do about his plight. The Church taught that no sensible person would wait until his deathbed to make an act of contrition and plead for grace. From beginning to end the only secure course was to lay hold of every help the Church had to offer: sacraments, pilgrimages, indulgences, the intercession of the saints. Yet foolish was the man who relied solely on the good offices of the heavenly intercessors if he had done nothing to insure their favor! ...And what better could he do than take the cowl? ...He who died in the cowl would receive preferential treatment in heaven because of his habit. ...even St. Thomas Aquinas himself declared the taking of the cowl to be second baptism, restoring the sinner to the state of innocence which he enjoyed when first baptized. ...Monasticism was the way par excellence to heaven. ...Luther knew all this." **Roland Bainton**, "Here I Stand", p. 22-24

[at Luther's entrance ceremony into the Augustinian Monastery] "...the prior described the rigors of the life to be undertaken: the renunciation of self-will, the scant diet, rough clothing, vigils by night and labors by day, mortification of the flesh, the reproach of poverty, the shame of begging, and the distastefulness of cloistered existence. ...the initiate bowed the knee, 'Bless thou thy servant,' intoned the prior. 'Hear, O Lord, our heartfelt pleas and design to confer thy blessing on this thy servant, whom in thy holy name we have clad in the habit of a monk, that he may continue with thy help faithful in thy Church and merit eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.' ...To the monastery he went like others, and even more than others, in order to make his peace with God." **Ronald Bainton**, "Here I Stand", p. 26

Sola Gratia – “Grace Alone” ...in Scripture

Standing in Stark Contrast to the Church’s ‘Grace + ’ View ...was the Reformer’s Assertion that the Bible Taught No Such Thing— it Taught SOLA GRATIA—“Grace Alone”

Galatians ... Luther was taking the same stance that Paul took in the 1st Century!

Gal 1:6-8 ...Paul labeled “GRACE + ” as ‘ANOTHER GOSPEL’!!

Gal 3:2-3, 5-6 ...the Basis of Your Righteousness was—‘God’s Grace Received by Faith’
...so why are you now injecting the idea of being ‘perfected by the flesh’?

Gal 5:2-4 ...God’s Formula of Salvation PROHIBITS Human Contribution—a Sub-Atomic Particle of Man’s Contribution would Invalidate Grace!!

Rom 3:21-29 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.

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Rom 11:5-6 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.

'Legal/Accounting' Grace ...or 'Medical' Grace?

Is Grace 'Imputed' (Counted to One's Account) **or is it 'Imparted'** (as a source that can bring healing)?

*The early Latin fathers, who studied the Scriptures by means of the Vulgate (the fourth-century Latin translation of the Bible) rather than the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) and the Greek New Testament, ... In time, the doctrine of justification came to address the question of how an unrighteous person, a fallen sinner, can be made righteous. In the development of the doctrine of justification in Rome, the idea emerged that justification occurs after sanctification. That is, in order to be declared just, we first must be sanctified to the point that we exhibit a righteousness that is acceptable to God. The Protestant Reformation, which followed the revival of the study of antiquities, focused attention on the Greek meaning of the concept of justification, which was the word dikaioo, which means "to declare righteous" rather than "to make righteous." So, in Protestantism, justification was understood to come before the process of sanctification. Therefore, very early on, there was a complete difference of understanding regarding the order of salvation between the two communions." R.C. Sproul, *Are We Together?* (p. 30). Kindle Edition.*

THIS is what Drove Luther Mad (Anfechtung)!!

- If "Grace" is like Medicine that We Cooperate with—it still doesn't rescue us from insecurity, because it STILL depends on US—*Some people who want to get well, still don't get cured by medicine!!—Ultimately 'cure' is based on Your IMMUNE SYSTEM!!*

— ***If 'salvation'/'Justification' is this 1MM Mile Journey to cross the finish line of God's Righteousness ...and we are able to say that Christ accomplishes 999,999 miles and 5,180 feet (leaving us ONLY 100 feet)...***

"Luther fought the church not because it demanded too much, but because it demanded too little." Oswald Spengler, "The Decline of the West"

- ***Do not dishonor God by 'lowering Him' and making him reachable by human effort!***

Scripture presents a God who is SATISFIED—Completely on the Basis of the 'once and for all' atoning work of Christ!

Heb 10:11-18 And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

¹⁶ "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,"

¹⁷ then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."

¹⁸ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

v. 11 ...the human contribution and the blood of animals CANNOT accomplish what Only the Blood of Christ accomplishes for us!!

v. 12, 14, 17-18 ...a "single sacrifice for all time" ...would result in a "perfected people" whose sins had been forgiven and will not be remembered!!