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Volume II, Issue 1

**THE SOLAS OF THE REFORMATION:  
SOLA GRATIA**

This is our fourth in a series of five sessions in which we deal with the great "Solas" of the Reformation.

Remember, we have dealt with Sola Scriptura, *Scripture Alone* as our final authority. Sola Fide, it is *Faith Alone* that saves, Sola Christus, it is *Christ Alone* who is to be worshipped and adored.

In this issue we will deal with **Sola Gratia: (Grace Alone)**

In both the Old Testament and the New Testament we are told of the horrible condition that mankind is in regarding his relationship with God.

Gen 6:5-6 "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart."

This tells us of the conditions that the world found itself just prior to the flood. Man was, in his heart, evil and that his thoughts were continually evil.

Jeremiah 13:23 "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? {Then} you also can do good who are accustomed to doing evil."

In this verse we are told that we are accustomed to doing evil and that we, just like the leopard and like the Ethiopian cannot change who we are.

It is very important to see that we have been told that we are evil in our thoughts and evil

in our deeds and that we cannot change.

We see another verse, Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?"

Here we are told that our "heart" is sick and deceitful. Man is in a bad condition.

Some would hope to flee to the New Testament and find hope for this person but our search in this part of the Scriptures reveals the same condition.

Romans 3:10-18 as it is written say's, "There is none righteous, not even one; 11 There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one. 13 Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips; 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood, 16 Destruction and misery are in their paths, 17 And the path of peace have they not known. 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes."

In desperation we continue to search and finally fall upon Ephesians 2:1 "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins."

With this final verse, we throw our hands in the air and in frustration cry out, "then how can we be saved?"

Paul must have sensed this type of frustration because in this same chapter, in verse 8 and 9 he gives us the answer.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, {it is} the gift of God; 9 not as a result of

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works, that no one should boast.”

There is much debate as to whether the gift of God is faith or salvation. In this particular article it does not really matter, both the faith that is the instrument whereby God declares us to be righteous and the gift that results, our salvation, is totally and wholly of God.

This is the teaching of the Reformers, that we are saved from the wrath of God by grace alone, and that individuals are justified by grace alone through faith. The term allows only *grace* to be the active power in justification and leaves nothing to the human will or to human work. Even faith is a result of grace and cannot be considered as the result of human effort.

In order to understand this theological truth and to teach these principles, the early Reformers, most prominently Martin Luther and John Calvin, had to look backwards for over one thousand years because, for the last one thousand years Rome had taught that through the process of baptism, the individual was “infused” with righteousness and was thus capable of cooperating with the Holy Spirit in personal salvation.

The Protestant Reformation brought men back to the truth that they are incapable of any works that merit salvation and that in and of ourselves we are totally incapable of doing anything that even resembles the ability to do any good works worthy of salvation.

The normal Evangelical will, of course, agree that he is in desperate condition and will agree that he is “dead in his trespasses and sins” but will in the same breath declare that he and he alone has the final say so in his salvation.

Recently, on a major television program, a popular preacher declared to a group of people that **Christ has done all that He can do, now the rest is up to you.** We must ask ourselves, “has the creator God given up His sovereignty to the fallen

creature?”

If we believe that Christ has done all that He can do, we must ask ourselves what do we truly believe about His sovereignty. Like it or not, this is not Christ alone, it is Christ plus man and what man is willing to do.

We must also deal with the fact that we are spiritually dead. How do we deal with this? Do we really believe that a person that is dead spiritually can actually exercise faith and repentance? Many do, and in doing so must confess that they are believing a contradiction. People who are spiritually dead do not exercise faith.

God must do a work of regeneration, give them new life and then they can exercise their new found faith. They can now repent and be saved.

In the words of the Reformers, regeneration precedes faith.

Tell fallen man that he is incapable of doing anything that is worthy of salvation and he responds in indignation. This is a sure sign that he is fallen man.

Instead of preaching Christ alone, we preach “self-esteem,” health and wealth gospel. Some in evangelical circles will and do preach that if you attempt to live by faith that you can demand things of Christ and He must obey you. Here again the creature has become the creator and God is subservient to the creature.

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## Our Purpose...

**The Purpose of  
Reformed Discipleship Ministries  
is to bring the truth  
of the Reformation  
to a discipling ministry...**

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We must believe and understand that all of mankind is under the curse of Adam, fallen in his nature and incapable of any move toward salvation.

It is Christ who has done all the work. It is His total mercy that caused Him to save us. If He chose to destroy the universe at this very moment, He would be a good, righteous, Holy and merciful God because He has saved unworthy sinners in the past.

Please remember that our salvation is by Grace Alone, and not based on any works that we might do. Rejoice in the fact that God loved you so much that by Grace and Sola Gratia He saved you and keeps you till the end.

Talk to you next time.

*Louis*

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## ON A PERSONAL NOTE...

Monday night I had helped move furniture and was quite tired. My Tuesday morning bible study did not begin until next Tuesday so I decided to sleep in just a little later. I was awakened by a hand shaking me and telling me that I had to get up and come see what was happening.

When I got into the den, Kay, my daughter Kim and her husband Ken (who is a pilot for United) were sitting staring at the television. Just like the rest of the nation, I could not believe my eyes. As we sat and watched all the horror, suddenly the first building collapsed, I looked at Kim and said, "Baby" (I call her baby) did that building just fall down? We now all know the answer.

There has been a lot of flag waving and singing of God bless America and I have been right there with them. Who can watch the beginning of the ball games and see the eagle soaring overhead and not get a lump in their throat. I confess, I'm guilty.

Many have said this is bringing us back to God, yet I have not really seen any type of repentance. Just a lot of "God Bless America" as we wave our flag. This is all good, I've waved my flag and sang with the best of them 😊.

Many have quoted 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

What is this verse teaching us? When God says "My people" who was He talking about? He was referring to His chosen nation the Jews. It must be remembered that the Jewish nation did not go into captivity because the Hittites and Amorites and Philistines sinned. The Jews went into captivity because the Jews sinned. God's chosen people were not obeying his commands. People who are not "Christians" are suppose to disobey, that is their job.

As we move into the modern day who would God be referring to when He says "My People?" In America it would be His chosen people, the Christians. We as Christians need to repent of our sins and cry out to God for His mercy.

The "land of the free and the home of the brave" has been attacked by a godless people. (I will not be politically correct and say that they worship the same God as we do, they do not.)

I urge you, as a believer in Christ, to go to Him in prayer and confess your sins, as I have done and pray that "He will hear from heaven, forgive our sins and heal our land."

Please do not cease to pray for our President. He is setting a pace for us as the head of this nation. There are a lot of men who would like to take his life. Pray for his protection and wisdom as he leads us in these troubled times.

If you are needing to give extra money at the end of the year for tax purposes, will you please pray about giving to this ministry. I would greatly appreciate any financial help you could give. We are behind in our monthly support.

Happy New Year!

*Dr. Louise Hill*

## MINISTRY *update:*

Almost seven years ago our family arrived in Colorado Springs with all the anxieties of moving to a different region and community. We began praying and searching for a church community and an older couple that could mentor our family.

It took four years but God in his love, blessed us with a mentoring couple in the Hills. Through Bible study and individual discipleship, we gained a deeper understanding of God's word. We were also taught the reason for strong accountability within the church and have found our church home at Village Seven Presbyterian. The Hills are constantly challenging us to grow in the knowledge and service of our Lord, and they make us feel loved and appreciated. They truly are like our parents in so many ways. They are such a blessing to us!

We believe that our society has lost the tradition and the discipline of discipleship. For this reason and the tremendous impact the Hills have had in our life, we are excited to support and to be a part of the ministry opportunity that Reformed Discipleship Ministry is providing our community.

In His service, Bobby & Ann Silva

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# Historical Facts



## King Henry VIII

Henry VIII, (1491-1547) founded the Church of England, which might sound rather “spiritual” but Henry did this for a very selfish and sensual reason. When he became king in 1509, following his brother’s death, he also married his brother’s wife Catherine of Aragon. Catherine bore him five children, but only one of them lived, her name was Mary. Henry declared that England was not ready for a female sovereign and so he wanted a son.

In his reading of the Scripture he came across Leviticus 20 verse 21 which reads. “If {there is} a man who takes his brother's wife, it is abhorrent; he has uncovered his brother’s nakedness. They shall be childless.”

Henry believed that his marriage to Catherine, who was his brother’s wife had been cursed by God and that he would never have a male child. He appealed to the Pope in Rome for an annulment of his marriage to Catherine, but this was refused. Another reason that he appealed for this annulment was that he had gotten one of the maids of honor in his court pregnant. Her name was Ann Boleyn.

Ann Boleyn became the wife of Henry and she like Catherine, could only give him daughters. (This was the Dark Ages and no one knew that it was the husband that determines the sex of the child.) Henry had played his annulment card so he needed another reason for divorcing his second wife.

The men around Henry trumped up charges against Ann and declared that she had committed adultery. She had not committed adultery, but that did not matter, Henry wanted a divorce. Ann was beheaded in the tower of England declaring her innocence. Ann had given Henry another daughter, Elizabeth. She later became Queen of England as Queen Elizabeth I. The present queen of England adopted the title Queen of England II.

When the Pope continued in his refusal to annul the marriage to Catherine, Henry broke from Rome and started his own church. This church is the Church of England and Henry VIII was the head. Queen Elizabeth of today is the head of the church and her son, Prince Charles, upon becoming King of England, will be its head. In America this is the Episcopal Church.

Mother Goose had something to say about this relationship between Henry VIII, Catherine and Ann.

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**TRUTH***matters*



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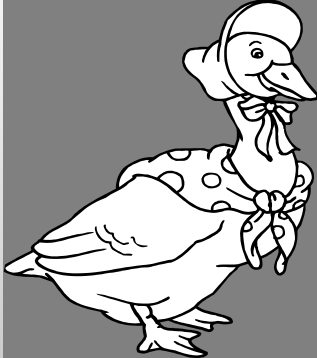
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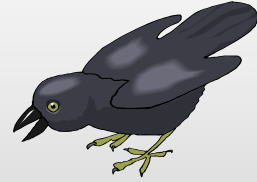
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## MOTHER•GOOSE



## Blackbird

The king was in the counting house  
Counting out his money,  
The Queen was in the parlor,  
Eating bread and honey:  
The maid was in the garden,  
Hanging out the clothes,  
Along came a blackbird,  
And snipped of her nose.



The King is Henry VIII. The Queen is Catherine of Aragon unaware that she was about to be usurped. The maid is Ann Boleyn in her pretty clothes from France. Ann was subsequently snipped by the grimmest “blackbird” the headsman with the axe.

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# SHORTER CATECHISM

**Q. 14. What is sin?**

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

**Q. 15. What was the sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created?**

A. The sin whereby our first parents fell from the estate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

**Q. 16. Did all mankind fall in Adam’s first transgression?**

A. The covenant being made with Adam, not only for himself, but for his posterity, all mankind, descending from him, by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression.

**Q. 17. Into what estate did the fall bring mankind?**

A. The fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery.

**Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?**

A. The sinfulness of that state whereinto man fell consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called Original Sin, together with all actual transgression which proceed from it.