

Christ Alone

For most of human history the structure of society has been in the shape of a pyramid. The largest group making up the base filled with slaves or commoners. Moving up the pyramid the groups would get smaller, comprised of military, government, and religious leaders until finally reaching a King, Pharaoh or Caesar at the top. It was an understanding that a person at the bottom could not just go and approach the King, they were not worthy. They needed a patron.

As we look at the early 1500's the Catholic Church embraced this concept completely. Patron saints existed for almost everything and every circumstance. From Saint Anne for miners to Saint Elmo for sailors and even Saint Wilgefortis, the saint a wife prayed to for getting rid of a detestable husband. But these saints were false idols, held up as examples of how good individuals could be on their own, striving in their own power to be worthy of salvation.

Not only had the Catholic Church been forcing members to pray to the different saints at various times, it also attacked the sufficiency of Christ's work. The entire concept and practice of Indulgences is based on the merit those who were so godly that they were able to get into heaven all on their own and have some left over for others.

When the Reformers looked at scripture they saw that there is only one intercessor between God and man, Christ Jesus. In 1 Timothy 2 it says "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." Christ's work and person are the only way to come to God, not by saints, not our own works, which are always tainted with sin. By attacking the practice of indulgences and the praying to saints, the Reformers were pointing to Christ and saying "His work is sufficient to make us reconciled to God."

With Sola Scriptura showing us the truth of Sola Gratia being the only way that we can desire God, we can understand that we are reconciled only by Sola Fide in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone, Sola Christus.

Colossians 1:9-23 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,

20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled

22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight —

23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.