

The Five Solas (2017): Solus Christus

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[0 : 00] Good morning. Take out your Bible and turn to Romans chapter 3.! We've been promoting books and stuff.

! I think if I had to promote one good Reformation book, I think I would pick this one.! This is a book that I read when I was on the waiting list for my lung transplant.

So, right under the Bible, I was reading this. And I can't tell you how much this ministered to my soul during that time as I thought about what was ahead of me.

So, it's not just dead doctrine, dead theology. It was like really encouraging me in the Word of God. And so, this is John Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion.

And this is the abridged version. So, halfway through, I just kind of donked on me, wait a minute, this is the abridged version. The real one's about like that. But it just really explains so much about the person of God, the person of Christ, the Scripture.

[1 : 19] And it really ministered to me, particularly the part about God's providence, God's sovereignty, through what I was going through. And so, I commend this one to you, the Institutes of the Christian Religion.

It was written in 1559, I believe. So, pretty awesome to read the old dead guys. So, this would be mine.

I can't give it to you. This is my copy. It's got like everything. You wouldn't like my notes in here anyway. So, Romans 3 is what we're going to be picking up today.

And as it's already been said, we're coming up on October 31st, which is the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. It kind of marks the day that Martin Luther in 1517 nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Church of Wittenberg.

And so, we're going through the five solas, which really are a summarized, condensed way of saying this is what the Reformers taught. But it probably wasn't really even consolidated like that until about the 20th century.

[2 : 30] But it's what they were teaching. And that's what we believe in our church. And any church that's really a Protestant evangelical church holds these things dear. So, I mean, why is this so important, though?

Well, the sola alone is so important to what we believe. And what we believe Scripture teaches. If it's not sola, then it is something that's got to be added in.

If it's not alone, there's something else that's added to it. It will be Scripture and something else is our authority. Grace and something. Faith and something.

Christ and something. And to the glory of God and something else. And so, the sola is really, by saying what is true, they're also saying this is false. Like, if you add something to this, it's not true. And so, the Reformers were saying, Scripture is not only necessary, but it's sufficient. Christ's work is not only necessary, but it is enough to save us.

[3 : 35] That grace is not only necessary, but it is perfectly the only way, like we are made right with God. And Scripture is just not a authority. It's the only authority.

Period. So, you pull out your bullets and there's a quote there by Calvin that I thought would be good to kind of put our mind on.

I just want to pray briefly, but it says, The gospel is not a doctrine of the tongue, but of life. It cannot be grasped by reason and memory only.

But it is fully understood when it possesses the whole soul and penetrates to the inner recesses of the heart. So, that's what we want.

We want this not just to be head knowledge, not just to be mental assembly. We want our hearts and our souls to rejoice in the gospel and have these truths penetrate us to our inner heart.

[4 : 34] So, let's pray together. Father, as we join together this morning as your people, I pray you give us eyes to see, ears to hear.

God, you would soften our hearts to receive your word. That you would make us teachable. That we would sit quietly before your word and receive what is there.

And I pray that this feeble attempt to describe Christ and his work would move in our hearts today. And I just ask that in his name. Amen. So, today, we are looking at solus Christus, Christ alone, which emphasizes the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It's not only necessary, again, for salvation, but it is sufficient. Enough to say to the uttermost, all those who come to Christ. So, this means that no amount of human work can be added to the work of Christ.

[5 : 45] It's like Christ's work is so sufficient, so perfect, that it can't be improved upon in any way. So, that is really important to understand.

And it implies, then, if Christ's work is sufficient, that any work we bring in is insufficient. All right? Like Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3.5, Now, not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.

So, the heart of the gospel is that Christ is for us. He is for us. It's the message of the New Testament, indeed, really the Scripture, the whole of Scripture. So, Christ lived.

He obeyed. He was crucified. He was raised. And He ascended. And He is returning. That's what we are saying. So, all that is embodied by Jesus Christ Himself is what we are saying when we say Christ alone.

Romans 1.9 is called, the gospel is kind of summed up as, The Good News of His Son. So, we are going to just look at some different aspects of Christ's work.

[6 : 58] And man, I was just overwhelmed studying all this. But, I want you to not run from, I've even heard recently some leaders in our Dahlenega community say, You know, doctrine doesn't matter.

Theology doesn't matter. All we really care about is a relationship with Jesus. Well, what does that mean? Don't throw out a Bible word. Paul uses the word doctrine at least 15 times in the New Testament.

And what he's trying to say is doctrine is explaining, clarifying. So, the Good News has to be explained verbally. It has to be clarified, expounded upon. And that's what doctrine is.

So, if you're talking about Jesus and it's truthful, you're talking doctrine. So, I want us to see, Man, this is the only thing I can grab. So, imagine this is like a gem, if you will, like a precious gem that was found.

It's not a gem, it's a stupid iPhone. I hate iPhones. But, just imagine this is like a precious diamond or gem. And it's called the work of Christ.

[8 : 04] Alright? So, if you look at it this way, you can explain it. And your explaining it is doctrine. And you tilt it a little bit and explain a different facet of it.

So, that's what we're going to do today as we look at the work of Christ. All part of the same diamond. But just different angles on it. Different descriptions on what he has done.

If you will. So, Romans 3. We'll start in verse 21. Together. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.

Although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction.

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And are justified by his grace as a gift. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

[9 : 08] 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 passed over former sins. 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.

So, that will be our primary text. That I want to draw some things out of. So, I have a few points today.

And off of Nathan's pun last week. It's just going to be points and not questions. I'm going to try not to do questions at this point. So, the first point. The first point.

Is that Christ alone is our mediator with God. Christ alone is our mediator with God. So, a mediator, simply put.

[10:12] Christ alone is one who intervenes between two parties. To resolve some conflict, intimacy, or strife. So, it's one who intervenes and solves the problem.

So, this is the role we see of Jesus in our text. We see some hostility. Right? We see that we have sinned and fallen short in the glory of God. And that we have to be made right with God some way. So, Christ is our mediator. Right? He's coming between us and God. And like reconciling. He's bringing us back together. So, it's important that you understand that.

Because Jesus alone, again, is our mediator. During the period of the Reformation, in the medieval time, you could even say today, Rome taught that the Pope and even the Roman Church itself was the mediator between God and man.

So, anyone outside of them, their doctrine says this, even today, anyone outside of the Roman Catholic Church is outside of salvation.

[11:25] They would teach that. Pope Clement, who was Pope between 1342 and 1352, he said, No man outside of obedience to the Pope of Rome can ultimately be saved.

All who have raised themselves against the faith of the Roman Church and died in final impenitence have been damned and gone to hell. That is still taught, even today.

And I want you to know that I say these things with a heavy heart. Many of you know I have had countless trips to the Emerald Isle of Ireland and talked to many Catholics there.

And so, it breaks my heart to see how falsely they have been instructed. And so, if you hear anger, just hear anger at the false teaching and not the lost soul.

I want them to be reconciled to God. Even as I've cried tears praying for some of them before. And so, at that point, like I said, they even taught, I mean, even now really, that Jesus is not that approachable.

[12:49] Okay? That he is still very holy, very set apart, very other. That you have to find another mediator to even go to Jesus. And that's where the idea of the Virgin Mary and her son is so pivotal.

Because who can get at a man, his mom? You know, this is a soft part of him. Even, I went to Birmingham this past week, and we drove by one of the biggest Mary worship shrines in the southeast.

Thousands of people gathered there to get a vision of the Virgin Mary and have someone say, This is what Mary says to you from Jesus. Heartbreaking and demonic.

And so, even then, they've added in saints. You can pray to the saints. You can pray to your dead relatives who have gone on to be with the Lord.

I had a dear friend, a man that was in his late 70s, that I worked out with at a gym for a long time. And he and I would talk about this kind of stuff.

[13:53] A devout Catholic. He had an Italian, really deep Italian last name. And we talked, and he was just always encouraging me to pray with my dead relatives.

And how encouraging that was. I'm like, man, no. And just begged him to say, Christ is the mediator alone. And so, the reformers were banging their heads and banging their Bibles, saying, Look, there is no other mediator between God and man.

It's Jesus Christ, and that's it. Don't misrepresent the character of God. He also can be approachable through Christ. Right? So, not Virgin Mary.

Not the saints or cardinals or priests. Only Christ alone. They're not crazy. They're just basically saying what Paul said in 1 Timothy 2, 5-6.

This is Paul. Listen to this. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men. The man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which the testimony given at the proper time.

[15:08] So, again, Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, Wycliffe. They were all saying, Brum, stop marring the character of God. Yes, he is holy. Yes, he is just.

Yes, he is righteous. But he is also a loving God and gracious. And he has provided a way through his Son to be brought back to man.

And Luther, if you study his life, the whole first part of his life, he was terrified of the judgment of God. That's all he thought about was God is wrath. God is damnation.

And he had no way to be made right with God. So, when he began reading Romans, he was like, wait a minute. This God is a loving God. This God is a gracious God. And he was transformed by the Word.

And so, Christ alone is the mediator. Hebrews 9, 15, it says, Therefore, Christ is the mediator of the new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. [16:10] It's awesome. So, this idea that Jesus is the only mediator spills into a lot of our thinking of saying that Jesus is the only way to God. He came from the Father and he went back to the Father.

He's the only one. So, this is not just a problem back then. It is today as well. Shockingly, in the late 90s, there was a study conducted of, quote, evangelical seminaries who agreed with the following statement.

35% of them agreed with the following statement. God will save all good people when they die, regardless of whether they know and have trusted Jesus Christ.

And now those people are pastoring churches outside of Christ. So, that's a struggle if we don't see our need for Christ.

Right? And one of the things that the Reformers kept bringing up is, Popes and councils over the history have just contradicted themselves over and over and over.

[17:14] You just heard me read Pope Clement from the 1300s. He said, There is no salvation outside of the Holy Roman Church. You heard me read that. More recent, though, Pope John Paul II.

He stood in December 6, 2000, and addressed 30,000 pilgrims at St. Peter's Square. Listen to what he said. Listen to this.

No. Jesus, the only way, the only mediator to God.

We know our famous verse, John 14, 6. Jesus told them, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one whatsoever comes to the Father except through me.

I am the mediator. Acts 4, 12. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we may be saved.

[18:39] So if we are to be saved and restored back to God, we have to come through Christ alone as our mediator. So that is the first point. Each one of these begin with Christ alone.

But number two, we are going to get into more of our text now. Christ alone made full atonement for our sin to God.

Christ alone made full atonement for our sin to God. Okay, so we see in our text that like it says that God's righteousness had to be upheld.

We see that he had to show that he was righteous, prove that he was righteous. And so it just means that God always does what is right, what is good. He, by his nature, is the very definition of what is right and good.

It means that he is holy. He is totally separated from all evil. And that also means that he is devoted to destroying evil. And we want him to be that way.

[19:42] We want him to be a God who seeks to uphold what is right and beautiful and good and true. So, if God opposes evil, then we should not be shocked that he is out to destroy it.

That's what we see in our text. We want God to be a God who upholds justice. A Roman citizen who lived under the Julio-Claudian Caesars, Augustus, you know, then all the way up into like Nero. That was that dynasty. This is something that he said when a man has absolute power. He said, And God is not like that.

God intrinsically, in his very core, hates evil. And we want him to be a God who upholds justice. We all see things on TV and the news that just cry out injustice.

And we want that. It's part of who we are. But if we really want that, then God also has to destroy us. Because we are a part of that same evil. It says in our text, you look at verses 25, This was to show God's righteousness.

[21:06] Because in his divine forbearance, he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier. So we see in the wisdom of God's sovereign plan, that he allowed Jesus to be punished in the place of sinners, and thereby justified those who were guilty without compromising his justice.

It's a beautiful text for you just to chew over. So let's talk about this word atonement a little bit. It is a very broad term that is used to entail a lot of things in the Scripture.

But in short, we're just going to define it simply as this. It's the work of Christ in his life and his death, all that he did to earn us salvation.

It's the work of Christ, all that he did in his life and his death, to earn us salvation. So Christ made right the hostility between us and God.

And he opened the door for spiritual blessings. So let's talk about just the nature of this atonement for a second. Just two words, big words, but I hope they stand out to you and you remember them. [22 : 25] That's the purpose of using big words. Penal substitution. Penal substitution. All right? Penal substitution. It's the idea that the penalty we deserve was given to someone else, to another who did not deserve it, and who took it voluntarily for us.

All right? It's this idea that Christ stood in our place, took our punishment, even though he didn't deserve it, but he took it willingly. That's what we did. We are spared the penalty.

This also can be described as a vicarious atonement, a vicarious someone who stands in the place of another and represents them. And so Christ stood in our place.

He represented us. He took the penalty we deserve. All right? So stay in Romans 3, but I just want you to turn to the famous Isaiah 53.

I just want you to see this idea of substitution, that Christ stood in our place and bore our punishment. This atonement was foretold 700 years before Christ.

[23 : 38] Isaiah 53. Then go to verse 4. I want you to see this. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Just look at the ours in this text. Borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions.

He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. And with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord, Yahweh, has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted.

Yet he opened not his mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter. And like a sheep that is before its shearers is silent. So he opened not his mouth.

[24 : 39] By oppression and judgment, he was taken away. As for his generation, who considered that he was cut off of the land, out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.

So if you see this idea of substitution there, our, you see that he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities. And so in our text, back in Romans 3, we see a really big Bible word that I beg of you to like, get in your head and really gnaw over it and pray over it.

It's in our Romans text, but it says, it's the word, propitiation. It's a big word. And the same Greek word is translated both propitiation and expiation.

And they carry slightly different meanings. So again, they're a part of the same gem, if you would. And, but together, they give a beautiful picture of what Christ has done for us.

And as we've been reading, it's just really cool that we've been reading through Leviticus and we're moving in the numbers now. We've read over the scripture that talks about the day of atonement in Leviticus, right?

[25 : 56] It's the day that Israel offered up a symbolic atonement that prefigured Christ's final atonement. And if you remember in the text, it talks about there are two different spotless goats.

One, the first goat was used as an act of propitiation. It was killed for the sins of the people and the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat.

And so it was focused on, in that sense, like satisfying the wrath of God. The second goat was not killed, but it was actually set free. It was sent out as an act of expiation, removing or blotting out our sins, right?

Before God. And in the focus, in this case, is that the second goat was called the scapegoat. That's where we get this from. It was sent out into the wilderness and it represented carrying away the sins of the people from the presence of God.

So, we see this in Jesus. Christ fulfilled both of those at the same time. He represented this complete work. So, Jesus not only propitiated the wrath of God by offering himself as a sacrifice, but he also removed our sin and guilt from the presence of God, which is a symbol of that second goat, if you would.

[27 : 20] So, let's just break down these words. Propitiation, again, the act is the act by which the sacrifice, in our case, Christ, bears the full wrath of God.

And it results in a changing of God's attitude towards us. Before we were enemies, we were hostile, and this sacrifice changed his attitude to favorable and acceptable and loving.

Some of your translations may use different words, but I guess if you had to come up with a really good, clear definition of what propitiate could say, it's not to appease, to placate, or to just, you know, glance off.

To appease carries like a negative kind of connotation for it. It's this idea of buying off an aggressor at a certain expense. To placate is very inadequate because it suggests like a soothing of the wrath of God.

Like he actually didn't unleash it, he was just kind of like, calm down, God. So, that's not what the word means either. It doesn't mean to deflect.

[28 : 33] Right? Like a boxer would strike away a blow, you know, by blocking. That's not what it implies as well. But the word, I think, that I've studied, that I've read, that I believe best describes this is that word exhausted.

Christ exhausted the wrath of God on the cross. So, not deflected it and just prevented it from reaching us, but he absorbed it, he exhausted it.

So, all of God's holy fury was unleashed on his beloved son and he held none of it back on behalf of his people. So, that is the word propitiate.

It means that Christ exhausted the wrath of God. So, that's the one part. Then tilt it to expiation. It implies, again, the removal of our sin and our guilt from the presence of God.

Alright? Sin, do you know that, like, let's say you committed a serious crime and you went to court and it was really killing your soul, gnawing on you, vexing your conscience, weighing you down with guilt and shame.

[29 : 42] And the judge forgave you and pardoned you, but you still went home with that same guilt, that same torn up conscience. This is what expiation does.

It means that Christ's sacrifice has the power to cleanse you of guilt and of shame so that you can walk away clean and free.

Right? That's that picture of the second goat. That God has removed our sins from his presence.

Right? That famous verse in Psalm 103, 11-12, For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love for those who fear him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. So that's a cultural idiom to suggest an infinite distance.

East to west, right? Heaven to earth, an infinite distance. So, Jesus bore our punishment and propitiation, but he also carried away our sin and our guilt from the presence of God.

[30 : 52] When it says that Christ remembers our sins no more, it's not, it just basically means that he's choosing not to bring them up again. It doesn't mean that God literally forgets. It just means that he's not going to hold them against us any longer.

So our consciousness can be freed from guilt and shame by the blood of Christ. So, if you want one more tilt on this idea of atonement, it's very important that you understand this.

It was a decisive atonement. Decisive. It was so powerful, perfect, and clear, it never needs to be repeated again.

Hebrews 10 says, every priest, he's referring to the old covenant, every priest stands daily at his service offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But listen to this, but when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Right?

[32 : 01] And this is, this word is implied, I think, four times in the book of Hebrews because in the old covenant, the priests, the sacrifices, the rituals were never ending, over and over and over.

And so when Christ came, he fulfilled those things that never needed to be repeated again, ever. It's the, it's the Greek word, hapax, and it means once for all time.

It means that something happened that was so decisive and accomplished so much that it never needs to be repeated. So, and in fact, any effort to repeat it would be to be, to be, make a mockery of that sacrifice.

Right? So Christ's work was hapax. That's why, again, this idea that the Roman Eucharist, where they, they shed the blood of Christ afresh on the altar table and partake of it is so disgraceful and sad.

It's not real. Christ made that sacrifice. It's done. So all we do now is remember and rejoice in what he's done. Right? It was so sufficient, monumental, and effectuous that it never has to be done again.

[33 : 16] Once for all time. Hebrews 9, 26, again, this word's repeated. But as it is, Christ has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The conclusion then, of all that, is to say that Christ's suffering and death, if that was accomplished once for all time, we no longer can be condemned if we stand in Christ.

But there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus at all. So those of you who are a criminal justice major, there is no double jeopardy in God's courtroom.

There will be no, you will not be tried twice for the same crime at all. It's basis, Paul goes on in Romans 8, it says, who is to condemn?

And then it's assumed, no one. And then why? Because it's Christ Jesus, he was the one who died. The death of Christ secures our freedom from that condemnation.

[34 : 23] So, listen to something Luther said. I just want to throw this out there just before we move on to the next point and the idea of the atonement. So, I love this.

Talking about what Christ did for us, he said, so when the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this, I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it?

For I know one who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where he is, there I shall be also. The atonement of Christ, a complete, perfect, finished work, satisfied the wrath of God and carried away our guilt and shame from his presence.

Point number three, Christ alone is fully ours by faith alone. So, it's tying it into what we spoke of last week.

If you look at our text in Romans 3, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. He propitiated by his blood to be received by faith.

[35 : 42] Then you move on to 26, that he would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. So, that word is repeated multiple times for emphasis, meaning that you cannot earn what Christ accomplished.

You cannot be good enough, do enough good works. It is to be received alone by faith. So, that is the ground for our acceptance with God.

As you read in Romans and other places in the New Testament, you see that when we place saving faith in Christ, it unites us to Christ. We become one with him, so that his life becomes our life, his death becomes our death, and his resurrection will become our resurrection.

It is a beautiful, beautiful thing. It is important to throw this in as well, that it is the object of our faith that saves us, not our faith itself.

Okay? So, you can have a very weak faith. Jesus even said, even the side of a mustard seed would move a mountain, but it is the object of our faith that saves. All right?

[36 : 52] That is Christ, the Savior. So, we cannot add to what Christ has done. This is a gift that we are to receive by faith in Christ.

So, for sake of time, better move on to the next point. Point number four. Go back and listen to Nathan's sermon last week on faith if you want more on that. But, point number four.

Christ alone brought reconciliation with God. This is so key. Christ alone brought reconciliation with God.

So, we understand our sin and our rebellion separated us from God. Isaiah 59, but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

For God to hide his face means disgust, disfavor, judgment. And to see God's face means blessing. So, our sin separates us from God. That's the tragedy of our sin.

[37 : 59] It destroyed the perfect relationship we have with him. A beautiful, incredible being such as God separated because of our evil.

So, this is why the gospel is good news, okay? Because we are reconciled to God. Alright? Romans 5, a few chapters later, says, for if we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son.

Much more, now that we are reconciled, shall I be saved by his life. So, again, Christ comes in as our mediator, and he takes God, and he takes us, and he brings us back into fellowship together

again.

Now, hear me, a lot of people today want to preach the good news of the gospel apart from God himself. They don't understand that God is the gospel.

Being restored back to him is the good news. That's what all the gospel points towards. It is, Jesus said in John 17, this is eternal life, that you know the only true God in Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

[39 : 16] So, this is all about being restored back into a relationship with God. John Piper, in that book that Nathan actually commented to you earlier, he made this point.

All words of the gospel lead to God, or they are not the gospel. For example, salvation is not good news if it only saves us from hell and not for God.

Forgiveness is not good news if it only gives us relief from guilt and does not open the way to God. God is not good news if it only makes us legally acceptable to God but does not bring us into fellowship with God.

Adoption is not good news if it only puts us in the Father's family but not into his arms. God is the gospel.

So, if you simply have, if your gospel simply means I get to not go to hell and I get to go live forever in heaven, if that's where it ends, you need to think, you need to examine your heart.

[40 : 26] If someone went through this brutal, awful death for you, to save you from the greatest eternal torture ever and then gave you the greatest gift ever which would be to restore back to God in relationship and fellowship, that should change your heart.

In fact, that's what our word faith and believe in the New Testament means. It means that you have such a strong conviction about something that it changes how you live.

It's not just a mental ascent of I believe that. So, God is the gospel. He is the gospel. So, another verse for you.

1 Peter 3 18 says, Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he may bring us to God. Christ enables us to experience the full and lasting joy of seeing and savoring the glory of God forever.

That is what Christ came to do. So that we would glorify him, walk with him, know him, that what was lost in Genesis 3 is restored, but even in a greater sense than what Adam and Eve had.

[41 : 44] So, we can't just leave it there. Our sins alienated us from God, we were hostile, yet, Christ Jesus has once brought us for all time near to God through his blood.

That is the gospel. These are just a few things that I know scripture teaches very clearly about what Christ did for us once and for all. It's Christ alone.

So a few little things to walk away with, to chew on, in conclusion, that if all this be true then, Christ alone, it is to Christ alone we must be faithful and devoted to.

It demands everything, it demands our lives. I mean, I grew up most of my life having a false sense of assurance in Christ.

I fought because I prayed a prayer, an incantation, and that made me okay with God, and I lived like the devil for probably 16 years.

[42 : 54] No evidence at all that I loved Christ or knew him. And finally, I believe God saved me when I was around 18. and after that happened, I didn't want to do anything but live for him and even die for him.

And we have to get to that point where we see this sacrifice that he made, this work he accomplished, it's worth all you have, your time, your life, your money, everything.

He is to be the goal of it all. in fact, he even demands that if you follow him that you be willing to even take up your cross and die for him if need be.

And many of our brothers and sisters around the world, that's a reality. They become believers, they could face alienation from their family, their community, in prison, death, so they have to weigh that.

But what Christ did is so precious to them, they don't care. Right? So if following Christ would cost you your life, would you do it anyway? Is he that precious to you that you want all he has, that you're willing to surrender anything?

[44 : 08] So if this be true, it is Christ alone that we must be faithful. And so another spinoff of this is that we need to treat the blood of Jesus as precious.

Again, I talked about this probably the last time I was up here. It is not something cheap, it is something beautiful that we must guard and talk about in the most beautiful way is the blood of Christ.

Then lastly, I just want you to turn to 1 John and we'll end right here. 1 John chapter 4. So I know probably in a crowd this big that some of you are not sure maybe where you stand with God. And again, it is never too late even now to place saving faith your complete trust in Christ's work to reconcile you to God.

So 1 John chapter 4 verse 9 in this the love of God was made manifest among us that God sent his only son into the world so that we might live through him.

[45 : 27] And this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.

let's pray together. Let's pray together.