
Although mankind, through Adam’s fall, became dead in sin and unable to save himself, God was pleased to provide a way of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ alone (John 5:39; 14:6; Acts 4:12). In order to inherit eternal life, it is essential for a person, by the sovereign intervention of God, to be taken out of Adam and united with Christ (Romans 5:12–19). Salvation is in Christ and him alone. God’s work of redemption proceeds from God’s grace alone, on the basis of Christ’s mediatory work alone, through faith alone (Romans 1:2–4, 16–17; Ephesians 2:8–9). In the deepest sense, all the initiative in salvation lies with God, and the glory for salvation belongs to God alone (Romans 11:33–36; Ephesians 3:1–14; Revelation 5:9–10; 7:10).

(Sola 5 Confession 4.1)

Sola 5 is an association of God-centred evangelical churches in Southern Africa. While there is a degree of doctrinal diversity between the churches, all churches confess certain core doctrines. Most core to the identity of the association is the conviction that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone. The Latin phrases representing these five “alone” statements give the association its name: *sola gratia* (grace alone), *sola fide* (faith alone), *solus Christus* (Christ alone), *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone), *solī Deo gloria* (to God alone be the glory). Confession 4.1 captures these five solas.

The five solas have to do with the way that God saves his people. It is not surprising, therefore, that the clause in question begins by highlighting human lostness: **Although mankind, through Adam’s fall, became dead in sin and unable to save himself, God was pleased to provide a way of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ alone.** This clause, and the Scriptures on which it is based (John 5:39; 14:6; Acts 4:12), highlight the absolute exclusivity of Jesus Christ. Sinners have always had a problem with Christianity’s claims to exclusivity. How do we effectively share the exclusive claims of the gospel with a world that rejects any claim to exclusivity? _____

If there is no salvation outside the finished work of Jesus Christ, how were Old Testament saints saved? _____

The Confession continues by highlighting the necessity of divine sovereignty for salvation: **In order to inherit eternal life, it is essential for a person, by the sovereign intervention of God, to be taken out of Adam and united with Christ.**

Read Romans 5:12–19 and notice the reference to Adam as a “type” of Christ (v. 14). We tend to think of a “type” as one who, in some way, bears striking similarity to the one of whom he is a type. Adam and Christ seem polar opposites: Where Adam sinned, Jesus didn’t. In what way was Adam a “type” of Christ? _____

Paul contrasts Adam’s “one trespass” with Christ’s “one act of righteousness” (v. 18). Explain what he means by these two contrasting terms. _____

What does it mean to be **taken out of Adam** and to be **united with Christ**? _____

The great doctrines recaptured in the Protestant Reformation are brought to the fore in the Confession: **Salvation is in Christ and him alone. God’s work of redemption proceeds from God’s grace alone, on the basis of Christ’s mediatory work alone, through faith alone.** We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Why is it so crucial to recognise that salvation comes this way? _____

Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8–9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” What is the “this” that is “not your own doing”? _____

This particular clause concludes: **In the deepest sense, all the initiative in salvation lies with God, and the glory for salvation belongs to God alone.** The texts supplied (Romans 11:33–36; Ephesians 3:1–14; Revelation 5:9–10; 7:10) make this fact abundantly clear. Evaluate the following statements and assess whether it is true that the actions described rob God of glory that rightly belongs to him alone.

We rob God of glory when we accept rather than deflecting praise. _____

We rob God of glory when we praise others without referencing God. _____

We rob God of glory when we try to solicit praise from others. _____

We rob God of glory when we engage in false humility. _____

Given the above abuses, how can we act in such a way to ensure that we actively give praise and glory to God alone? _____