



First Christian Reformed Church of Lynden
From Generation to Generation for the Glory of God

God's precious and exceedingly great promises in hard times

Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

October 31 is Reformation Day, the day Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany. This occasion gives us an opportunity to remember some of the great truths of Scripture that had been lost and were recaptured by the many great reformers God raised up. Through our devotionals this week I will focus on the five solas or five onlys that summarize the Reformation.

Scripture alone (sola Scriptura) · *Christ alone* (solus Christus) · *Grace alone* (sola gratia) · *Faith alone* (sola fide) · *God's glory alone* (soli Deo gloria).

Scripture

Reflections on "Grace alone" in Scripture.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8 For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Micah 7:18-19 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Acts 20:32 Now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Romans 3:23-24 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

II Corinthians 12:8-9 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Ephesians 2:1-10 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

II Timothy 1:9 God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Song

Psalm 59:16 *But I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress.*

[You can Google the hymn to hear it if you would like to sing along.]

Grace Alone

Every promise we can make,
Every prayer and step of faith;
Every difference we will make is only by His grace.
Every mountain we will climb,
Every ray of hope we shine;
Every blessing left behind is only by His grace.

Refrain: Grace alone which God supplies;
Strength unknown He will provide.
Christ in us, our cornerstone,
We will go forth in grace alone.

Every soul we long to reach,
Every heart we hope to teach;
Everywhere we share His peace is only by His grace.
Every loving word we say,
Every tear we wipe away;
Every sorrow turned to praise is only by His grace. *Refrain*

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Prayer

II Chronicles 7:14 *If my people, who are called by my Name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

Prayer: Holy Father, I pray as your servant Paul prayed for Philemon (5-9). I pray that you would grant to us a fuller knowledge of every good thing that you have done for us in Christ and that as a result we would gain great comfort and joy and love and compassion; and that as a result the sharing of our faith would become more effective. I pray that you would stir our hearts to prayer and to seeking out relationships with those who don't know you, that we might be instruments in your hands in rescuing them from the domain of the prince of this world. Add to your church and to this congregation those who are being saved and disciplined and equipped and sent out. Do this for your glory and that in the coming ages there would continue to be a testimony of the immeasurable riches of your grace to us in Christ Jesus. Amen.

From "Love Lusters"

A prayer from The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers.

Prayer: Christ was all anguish that I might be all joy,
cast off that I might be brought in,
trodden down as an enemy that I might be welcomed as a friend,
surrendered to hell's worst that I might attain heaven's best,
stripped that I might be clothed,
wounded that I might be healed,
athirst that I might drink,
tormented that I might be comforted,
made a shame that I might inherit glory,
entered darkness that I might have eternal light.
My Savior wept that all tears might be wiped from my eyes,
groaned that I might have endless song,
endured all pain that I might have unfading health,
bore a thorned crown that I might have a glory-diadem,
bowed his head that I might uplift mine,
experienced reproach that I might receive welcome,
closed his eyes in death that I might gaze on unclouded brightness,
expired that I might for ever live.