
Sermon Notes

October 8, 2017

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Faith Alone Romans 3:21-25

Faith Alone

- ❖ What does it mean to
 - come to God in faith?
 - live by faith?
- ❖ The picture of a man and woman uniting in marriage pictures what coming to God by faith alone is all about

The Five *Solas* of the Reformation

- ❖ Five indispensable beliefs without which the church of Jesus Christ cannot survive
- ❖ These five tenets do not stand in isolation from each other, they are interdependent
 - Scripture Alone
 - Grace Alone
 - Faith Alone
 - Christ Alone
 - Glory to God Alone

Bible Truth Lost and Recovered

- ❖ Over the course of many centuries, the church lost sight of the way God saves us by grace alone through faith alone
 - in the medieval church most people, including most of the clergy, were ignorant of the gospel
 - emphasis was placed on trusting the church and its teaching, not trusting God, Christ, or the Bible
- ❖ A key text that helped the Reformers recover the truth of what the Bible teaches about salvation by grace alone through faith alone is Romans 3:21-25
 - Paul uses the image of the courtroom
 - all are sinners, no one is righteous, no one understands, no one seeks God
 - only God can remedy this sad situation
 - God justifies us by His grace as a gift through
 - *the redemption that is in Christ*
 - *propitiation by His blood*
 - in justification, God declares sinners to be righteous by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone
 - God transmits His gift of grace to us through the channel of faith
 - we depend on God to provoke and promote saving faith within us so we can, in turn, respond by faithfully committing ourselves to God's good work for us, in us, and through us

3D Faith

❖ Knowledge

- faith starts with knowledge, it is not a series of vague notions or ill-defined sentiments
- faith has clearly defined, definite content

❖ Belief

- it is possible to know accurately the complete content of Christian doctrine, to believe it, even to teach it and still be lost
- saving faith includes a component of belief that takes things beyond the head to the heart

❖ Commitment

- commitment is a surrendering of ourselves which takes us beyond knowledge and belief
- to know and believe are not sufficient in themselves (*cf.* James 2:19)
- commitment involves a radical change of values
 - a change of allegiance
 - a change of who “calls the shots” in our lives (Luke 9:23-24)
- saving faith requires us to surrender every aspect of our lives to Jesus’ Lordship

- ❖ Knowing, believing, and committing ourselves to God has parallels with a man and woman who come to know each other, woo each other, and commit to each other in marriage
 - the church is the bride of Christ
 - it takes two to make marriage vows!
- ❖ To know, believe, and commit yourself to Jesus Christ is salvation

Personal Application

1. Having examined these Scriptures, are you convinced that you have come to God in faith AND that you are living by faith?
2. Does your expression of faith represent all three dimensions: knowledge, belief, and commitment? If not, please consider speaking with a Christian friend or church leader to talk about growing your faith.
3. Spend time in praise and worship, thanking God for the gift of His grace that He brings into your life through faith in Christ alone.