

Reformational Reflections from the Anglican Connection Conference

1. The Five “*Solas*” of the Reformation

a. As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation on October 31st this year, the Anglican Connection held a conference “to refresh our theological thinking and ministry practice...through the lens of the 16th century ‘alones’”. -John G. Mason, Chairman

b. “*Sola*” = “Alone”

i. “The Roman Church taught that the foundation for faith and practice was a combination of the scriptures, sacred tradition, and the teachings of the magisterium and the pope; but the Reformers said, ‘No, our foundation is sola scriptura’. The [Roman] Catholic Church taught that we are saved through a combination of God's grace, the merits that we accumulate through penance and good works, and the superfluity of merits that the saints before us accumulated; the Reformers responded, ‘sola gratia’. The [Roman] Catholic Church taught that we are justified by faith and the works that we produce, which the righteousness that God infuses in us through faith brings about. The reformers responded, ‘No, we are justified by faith alone, which lays hold of the alien righteousness of Christ that God freely credits to the account of those who believe’. The [Roman] Catholic Church taught that we are saved by the merits of Christ and the saints, and that we approach God through Christ, the saints, and Mary, who all pray and intercede for us. The Reformers responded, ‘No, we are saved by the merits of Christ Alone, and we come to God through Christ Alone’. The [Roman] Catholic Church [taught] the glory for a sinner's salvation

could be attributed partly to Christ, partly to Mary and the saints, and partly to the sinner himself. The reformers responded, ‘No, the only true gospel is that which gives all glory to God alone, as is taught in the scriptures.’

–Monergism (2008)

<https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/qna/fivesolas.html>

- c. We are saved by grace **alone**, through faith **alone**, on the merits of Christ **alone**, as revealed in the Bible **alone**, to the glory of God **alone**.
 - i. This is an essential teaching of the Reformation embraced by Anglicanism.
 - ii. The emphasis, from beginning to end, is on God. It is God’s free un-merited and undeserved gift (“grace”) of salvation to us secured by His Son, Jesus, on the Cross in Whom we trust for that salvation for God’s glory.
- d. When I arrived at St. Patrick’s, the “Five *Solas*” of the Reformation were relatively unknown.
 - i. However, in God’s grace, we have grown, and we continue to be reformed by God through...

2. The Essential Resources God Has Given to His Church

a. Word and Spirit

b. Luke 24:44-49

i. A Passage we have already considered but worth revisiting.

1. Bishop Paul Barnett helpfully offered a couple lectures we attended entitled “The Good News which is True News” in which he emphasized that our “faith” is rational.

a. Examples: Luke’s record of eyewitnesses, and historical reliability Luke 1:5-7, 2:1-3 which

we have previously studied. Also read from our passage in Luke today Luke 24:48.

ii. Keith Paulus

1. Verses 46-47

a. Word = Bible

i. Gospel = “Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead”.

ii. Luke’s version of the “Great Commission” Verse 47

1. Today, for us to be effective witnesses, we must know our Bibles and the Gospel, the Good News, it reveals about Jesus Christ. This is something John Yates highlighted as we considered the challenge of biblical illiteracy among God’s People.

2. Verse 49

a. Spirit = enables us not only to understand our Bible’s and the Gospel of Jesus, but to also fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel, which is ...

3. The Essential and Effective Message of the Church

a. Because God has given us, as His People, the Church, His Word and Spirit, we do not need to resort to gimmicks and worldly marketing methods to reach out to people with the Gospel of Jesus’ Person and work. God’s Word and Spirit are essential and the only genuinely effective means by which the Gospel is communicated to others.

b. Acts 17:22-34

i. Michael Kelshaw

1. First reminds us of “the strategy” which we recently considered and that reemphasizes our need to rely on the resources God Himself has given us in Acts 1:8. Spirit
2. Paul, the Apostle, was also “Bible Saturated” (Kelshaw) Acts 17:24-29
 - a. Note Bible passages cross-referenced from the Old Testament that Paul had in his mind that formed His understanding of God and the Gospel of Jesus. Word
 - i. Like John Yates, Michael reminds us the importance of knowing our Bibles.
3. Ignorance Verses 22-23
 - a. As we have discovered in our study of Proverbs, it is sinful in its denial of God.
 - b. How does Paul address their ignorance? Verses 30-31
 - i. Gives them God’s command to repent of their ignorance.
 1. “all people everywhere”
 - ii. Gives them the Gospel that:
 1. Jesus is God’s Just Judge Who
 2. God raised from the Dead
4. People’s Responses to GOD’s Resources (so we can simply rest and trust in Him) Verses 32-34
 - a. 1). Sneer/mock, 2). open to hearing more, or 3). join and believe,
 - b. “Paul fulfills his obligation regardless of the people’s response.”
5. Paul is used by God’s Word and Spirit as a servant-tool for God’s purposes and for God’s glory, alone.