

Five Solas of Reformation (2/5): 唯獨恩典

「五個唯獨」原文以簡潔的拉丁文寫成，是宗教改革者留給後人的五個信仰宣告。它們是：

1. *Sola Scriptura*, 唯獨聖經
2. *Sola Gratia*, 唯獨恩典
3. *Sola Fide*, 唯獨信心
4. *Solus Christus* (或 *Solo Christo*) 唯獨基督
5. *Soli Deo Gloria*, 榮耀唯獨歸神

唯獨恩典 vs. 功德 *Sola Gratia* vs. Human Merits

「唯獨恩典」和「唯獨信心」都與救恩有關：我們得救唯獨是「本乎恩，也因著信」。

你們得救是本乎恩，也因著信；這並不是出於自己，乃是神所賜的；也不是出於行為，免得有人自誇。（弗 2:8-9）

唯獨恩典！救恩完全出自於神的恩典，與功德無關。我們的好行為、屬靈的操練、悔罪、領受「聖禮」都對救恩毫無貢獻。神愛我們，救恩之中只有神的恩典，沒有其他的成分。基督為了我們的罪被釘死在十字架上，唯有他才是救主。救恩是建立在基督已經完成的救贖之上，而非我所累積的功德之上，從始至終都是神的恩典。

馬丁路德因內心的「不配感」而飽受折磨。他感到自己不配作神的兒女，更不配作神的僕人。他用盡一切的努力來使自己配得上：他經常認罪。有時剛認完罪，在路上想起忘記認某一個罪，又折回頭去重新認罪。他祈禱，禁食，遵守修道院一切的規條。可是無論他怎麼做，心靈仍然沒有平安。直到有一天他發現了「唯獨恩典」的真理：原來，救恩完全是神的恩典，我所做的一切與救恩無關！我的功德不但是微不足道的，更是完全不必要的。神愛我，我已經配得上了。恩典只需要領受，不需要表現。這項真理如同一道亮光，照亮了馬丁路德的靈魂。他的鎖鏈脫落了，他自由了。

唯獨恩典 vs. 自由意志 *Sola Gratia* vs. Free Will

人的自由意志在得救的過程中扮演了甚麼角色？如果救恩完全是神的恩典，是否表示「救恩的完成」和「救恩的領受」都是出自於神？神是否揀選了某些人，賦予他們接受救恩的能力，使他們得救？因為神若不賦予他們接受的能力，他們自己是無力接受救恩的？或是「唯獨恩典」僅牽涉到「救恩的完成」，不牽涉到「救恩的領受」？其實每個人都必須自己決定，並且有能力決定，他是否要接受救恩？

這是加爾文神學（Calvinism）與亞米念神學（Arminianism），長老會（Presbyterians）與衛理會（Methodists）的差異之處，也是作者不去涉足之處。這僅是一篇靈修的短文，不涉及神學的爭論。我想在這裡，只要說聖經的話就夠了：*你們得救是本乎恩，也因著信；這並不是出於自己，乃是神所賜的；也不是出於行為，免得有人自誇。*

唯獨恩典 vs. 自誇 Sola Gratia vs. Boasting

「唯獨恩典」除去了我們的自誇。我們都喜歡「自我感覺良好」，喜歡有一點點的自誇。不知不覺地，自誇變成驕傲，驕傲變成狂傲（arrogance），狂傲變成了常態的優越感。優越感引起幻覺，使我們的眼光扭曲，再也無法以平等的心看待別人。我們看不起某些種族，看不起某些國家或地區的人。看不起窮人，看不起地位或學位不如我們的人。我們覺得自己與眾不同，比別人更加優秀：

使你與人不同的是誰呢？你有什麼不是領受的呢？若是領受的，為何自誇，彷彿不是領受的呢？（林前 4:7）

「唯獨恩典」使我們謙卑下來，深知自己對救恩毫無貢獻。不但如此，對於所擁有的一切，我們也只是領受者的身分。我們的生命氣息，我們的工作，賺錢的能力（得貨財的力量，申 8:18），家庭和朋友，都是神所賜的。「唯獨恩典」將人人放在平等的地位：我們受造平等，得救平等，蒙恩平等。這樣的認知對於折騰的靈魂來說是一劑良藥，使人從驕傲的牢籠中走出來，以輕鬆的心情重新過日子。不再需要藉著鄙視他人來肯定自己，我們看人的眼光不同了。現在我們可以用欣喜的眼光來看那些與自己不同的人，擁抱他們，稱他們為弟兄姊妹。於是，自誇哪裡去了？不知道。反正我們這裡只有恩典，沒有自誇！

唯獨恩典 vs. 自憐 Sola Gratia vs. Self-pity

「自憐」與「自誇」是一個銅板的兩面，「唯獨恩典」沒收了我的自誇，同時也沒收了我的自憐。一旦知道自己得救完全是神的恩典，我的心中同時產生了兩種知覺：謙卑與自尊。謙卑，因為我對救恩毫無貢獻，一切都是神的恩典。自尊，因為神看我為寶貴，讓他的獨生子為我死在十字架上。如果基督都為我而死，我的價值乃是肯定的。

比起自誇，我們更常陷入自憐之中。我們極易受傷，感到自己不被看重。有時甚至會像路德一樣，感到自己很不配。我們懷疑自己的價值，需要別人經常的點讚和肯定。我們總是感到孤獨，在孤獨中變得軟弱，軟弱中開始自憐，自憐轉為沮喪，沮喪成為牢籠，於是我們陷在其中。這不是神要我們涉足的地方，不是他要我們停留的地方。

然而，我今日成了何等人，是蒙神的恩才成的，並且他所賜我的恩不是徒然的。（林前 15:10）

唯獨恩典！神的恩典絕非徒然，乃是大有功效的。這恩典賦予我自信和目的，領我走出自憐的幽谷，生活於陽光之下，結出美好的果子。就像保羅一樣。就像路德一樣。

唯獨恩典與永生的保障 Sola Gratia and Eternal Security

既然「唯獨恩典」，與我的功德無關，我的永生就有了保障。救恩是神的恩典，是我無法取消的。神救了我，他救我救到底！若非「唯獨恩典」，我將一直處於疑慮之中。我如何知道我死的那一

瞬間是得救的？我若將來犯罪了呢？我若忘記認罪呢？我還得救嗎？可是有了「唯獨恩典」，我就不再疑慮：一切都是神的恩典，不是靠我，而是靠他。讚美他的聖名！

唯獨恩典與基督徒生活 Sola Gratia and Christian Living

神的恩典使我得以過一個結果子的人生。不是任意妄為（都是神的恩典？無論怎樣都不會失去救恩？很好，那我就放縱自己，一直 party 到死。），而是被神的愛所激勵，為基督而活。

原來基督的愛激勵我們；因我們想，一人既替眾人死，眾人就都死了；並且他替眾人死，是叫那些活著的人不再為自己活，乃為替他們死而復活的主活。（林後 5:14-15）

神的恩典是我堅固的根基，我在其上建造喜樂並結果子的人生。我是神所愛的，有價值的，我的永生是有保障的。我是一個自由人，我選擇一生為救我的主而活。**Sola Gratia and Soli Deo Gloria!** 唯獨恩典，榮耀唯獨歸神！**Here I Stand**，我靠神的恩典得救，為他的榮耀而活。

Five Solas of Reformation (2/5): Sola Gratia

The five “solas,” expressed in concise Latin, are theological convictions of the Reformers. They are:

1. *Sola Scriptura*, by Scripture alone
2. *Sola Gratia*, by Grace alone
3. *Sola Fide*, by Faith alone
4. *Solus Christus*, Christ alone (or *Solo Christo*, through Christ alone)
5. *Soli Deo Gloria*, Glory to God alone

Sola Gratia vs. Human Merits

Both *Sola Gratia* and *Sola Fide* are theological convictions pertaining to salvation: We are saved by God's grace alone, by faith alone.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. Eph. 2:8-9

The word “sola” means “alone.” Salvation is achieved by nothing else but God's grace. Christ's redemptive act on the Cross sealed our salvation, he alone is our Savior. Not our good works, nor spiritual disciplines, nor penitence, nor the receiving of “sacraments” contribute anything to our salvation. Salvation is by God's grace, through Christ, from beginning to the end.

Luther was tormented by his feeling of unworthiness: unworthy to be called God's child, unworthy to be his servant. He did everything he could to make himself worthy: He confessed his sins. Often after a confession he realized he forgot to mention a certain sin so he returned to make another confession. He prayed. He fasted. He obeyed all the rules of his Order (Augustinian.) But no matter how hard he tried he was still a tormented soul. Then one day he discovered the truth of *Sola Gratia*, that salvation has

nothing to do with him. It is wholly by God's grace. His merits are not only irrelevant but also unrequired. Like a light this discovery shone into his soul. His bondages were gone. He was free.

Sola Gratia! Salvation is a free gift. It's not earned, it's received.

Sola Gratia vs. Free Will

Does human will play a part in salvation? If salvation is by God's grace alone, does it mean not only the achieving of salvation, but also the receiving of salvation is by God's grace? Does it mean he enables some people, chosen by him, to make a decision to receive salvation, a decision they otherwise are unable to make? Or does *Sola Gratia* pertain only to the achieving of salvation but not the receiving of it? Yes, salvation is free, but each person needs, and is able, to make his/her own decision on receiving it or not.

This is the difference between Calvinism and Arminianism, Presbyterians and Methodists, and that's the place I don't want to go to. No, I don't want get into a theological debate. For all the purpose of this short devotional, suffice it to say what the Bible has said: *It is by grace you have been saved. It is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

Sola Gratia vs. Boasting

Sola Gratia takes away our boasting. We like to feel good about ourselves. It all starts with a little boasting. Then pride. Then arrogance. Before we know it, we're soaked in a feeling of superiority: victims of our own illusion that we lose the ability to see or treat other people equally.

For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? 1 Cor. 4:7

The knowledge that we contribute *absolutely nothing* towards our salvation, and everything that define us, keeps us humble. Everything I have, I receive from God. My life, my works, my intelligence, my ability to earn money, to raise a family, to make friends, all are from God. *Sola Gratia* makes all of us equal, equally created and equally saved. It is good medicine to a troubled soul, releasing me from the prison of pride so I can live a happy life. Happy to see people who are different, to embrace them, to call them brothers and sisters. So where is boasting? *Sola Gratia!* There is only grace. No boasting.

Sola Gratia vs. Self-pity

Self-pity and boasting are flip sides of the same coin. When *Sola Gratia* takes away my boasting it takes away my self-pity also. The knowledge that I'm saved by God's grace alone creates in me a sense of humility as well as a sense of dignity. If God deem me so valuable to have his Son died in my place, whom am I to feel sorry about myself? Christ has died for me, in God's eyes I must worth something.

More than boasting we are oftentimes victims of self-pity. We're easily hurt. Feeling unappreciated. Or like Luther, unworthy. We doubt our own value. We need constant affirmation and confirmation. And

we feel lonely. Yes, it is in loneliness we're most vulnerable. Self-pity sets in and we're trapped in depression. No, it is not the place God wants us to stay.

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. 1 Cor. 15:10

Sola Gratia! God's grace is effective. It gives me confidence and purpose. It leads me out of self-pity to live a productive life. Like Paul. Like Luther.

Sola Gratia and Eternal Security

If salvation is by God's grace alone, not by my own merits, then I'm eternally secured. I cannot undo God's grace. God alone saves me and he saves me to the end. Without *Sola Gratia* I don't have the assurance of salvation. How can I be certain I'm a saved person the moment I die? What if I do something wrong in the future? What if I forget to confess my sins? With *Sola Gratia* I am free from these worries. It's all by God's grace. Not me, but Him. Praise his holy name!

Sola Gratia and Christian Living

God's grace enables me to live a fruitful life. Instead of giving me a license to live a life anyway I want to (So, it's all by God's grace? I won't lose my salvation no matter what? Good. I'll party till I die.), it compels me to live a life that pleases God.

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 2 Cor. 5:14-15

God's grace gives me a firm foundation upon which a happy and fruitful life is to be built. I'm loved. My value is affirmed. My eternity is secured. I'm free to live a life for the one who saved me. *Sola Gratia* and *Soli Deo Gloria!* By his grace I'm saved and to his glory I shall live.