

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Romans 9:30-10:4

September 3, 2017

Treasure *sola fide* and understand why the *religious* hate it.

It's just so wrong. Those who don't look for righteousness - find it. Those who devote their life to righteousness - miss out. That's not fair.

Do you know what that is? Someone stumbling over Jesus, the cornerstone of God's salvation? Why? *Wrong* and *fair* show they operate under the Law.

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❖ *Sola fide* - by faith alone we are righteous before God

- faith = believe = trust = reliance on someone/something else
- **Christ is the culmination of the law**
 - ♦ Jesus did the Law perfectly - he did what we can't do.
 - Every thought, work, deed - sinless. Avoiding every sin.
 - Always actively being righteous - right - delight in what's right.
 - ♦ Jesus died for our utter failures to be righteous. Slate wiped clean!
 - ♦ *Culmination & It is finished!* Same Greek root. *Nothing left undone.* God's righteous requirements were fully met for us and for all. Fact!
- God brings people into the state of righteousness:
 - ♦ The Spirit brings the gospel of Jesus' finished work, creates faith that relies on Jesus alone for their righteousness.
 - ♦ God does it all! Christ's work and the creation of faith in us
 - ♦ Those *who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith* - by relying on the finished work of Jesus.
- This is necessary - the **only way** we can obtain righteousness with God!
 - ♦ Every offspring of Adam totally lacks righteousness before God
 - Sure some have a good moral standing **among people**
 - None has done even 1 thing loving God with their whole being.
 - Righteousness requires: *Love the Creator with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind - all the time.* We haven't done that for 1 second!
 - ♦ Necessary. A chief role of the Law is to show us:
 - being righteous on our own is hopeless;
 - we need a Divine Savior to save us from our lack of righteousness.
 - ♦ **In Christ alone by faith alone** I have his righteousness before God!

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❖ The *religious* hate it. It's their downfall.

- Jews had God's revealed Law. Paul knew their zeal to keep it.
 - ♦ Jesus' message: *That will not work. Rely on me.* Seemed like heresy.
 - ♦ Devotees to righteousness by the Law killed Jesus, hated his Apostles
 - ♦ They were **insulted** to think God found their deeds to be trash
 - They ignored Isaiah: *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;* ... Isaiah 64:6
- All who rely on their devotion - their beliefs - stumble over Jesus
 - ♦ God doesn't place the stone to **cause** people to fall. He places the stone for people to rely on. But it's an offense to all who rely on their religiosity.
 - ♦ *See, I am setting Christ up in my church as a stone people stumble over and a rock they take offense at and trip over.* PBC Romans - p. 169
 - ♦ People find it offensive they can't do it themselves - in full or in part.
 - ♦ *Opino legis* tells us: *be good, do good.* What God expects. It must work.
 - This universal opinion of sinners finds God's gift *foolish.*
 - ♦ *Since they did not know the righteousness of God* (gift) *and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.* 10:3
 - ♦ Refusal to submit to God = reject him as my God. *I am my own god.*
 - ♦ To those who seek their own righteousness - *sola fide* is offensive.

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❖ Pew research poll this summer - status of *sola fide* after 500 years

- US Protestants: 46% - *faith alone* - 52% - faith and good works
 - ♦ Even though 77% knew *faith alone* was a key Reformation concept

❖ By *faith alone* leaves no room for *faith plus*.

- Common ways *faith alone* is eroded:
 - ♦ *Without deeds faith is not real, so deeds must be necessary.*
 - We're saved by faith alone, but faith is never alone. It produces fruits.
 - **What do you rely or rest on.** If deeds are required, *did I do enough?*
- Thinking: *my believing* is the reason God counts me righteous
 - ♦ That mean *my believing* is a good work.
 - *I truly sincerely believe with all my heart.* Who are you convincing?
 - ♦ I am **not** saved **because** of how much I believe or how strong.
 - Faith is a state - presence of the New Self - God's gift of New Life.
 - I have it or not. It may be small or weak, but I still belong to Christ.
 - When I am weak, I am most comforted: *Jesus is my Savior.*

Faith alone rests on Christ alone - his accomplished work - his word. Amen.