

# THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

RETRIEVING THE FIVE SOLAS

1517-2017

GRACE ALONE

**TITUS 3:3-8**

Like so many other issues during this time, there was conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformers when it came to the human condition and grace.

# The Medieval/Catholic Perspective

- \* Man was born under the curse of original sin.
- \* When baptized man is infused with an initial “deposit” of grace.
- \* The rest of life was lived either in a progression of that grace or a return to that grace. This was done primarily through participation in the sacraments of the church, or through doing Penance.

“The church had exchanged God-given grace for human religiosity: a jury-rigged system for appeasing the divine...”

*–Kevin Van Hoozer*

# Today there is still much confusion...

- \* It was John Locke who is credited with formulating that man is born as a “Tabula Rasa” or a blank slate.
- \* Jean-Jacques Rosseau touted the fundamental goodness of mankind, and taught that education was all that was necessary to prevent man from being corrupted by society.

“I know in my heart that man is good. That what is right will always eventually triumph. And there’s purpose and worth to each and every life.”

*-Ronald Reagan*

# The Fundamental Question...

\*Is the remedy to my condition found inside myself or does it come from outside?

“The church had exchanged God-given grace for human religiosity: a jury-rigged system for appeasing the divine...Grace contradicts every system of religion because God’s free mercy cannot be predicted, calculated, or manipulated. Grace is especially troublesome for control freaks—sinners curved in on themselves, bent on securing their own existence and status.”

*–Kevin Van Hoozer*

# EPHESIANS 2:1-5

**HOW DEAD ARE YOU?**

\*How you answer that question directly correlates to how you understand Grace.

**WHAT DOES THE BIBLE  
HAVE TO SAY?**

**DEAD**

**BLIND**

**FOOLISH**

**SLAVES TO SIN**

**LED ASTRAY**

**CHILDREN OF WRATH**

# REBELS

Given our condition, what's required is a saving initiative that can only possibly come from outside of ourselves.

Simply put, that saving initiative that God has taken on our behalf is what the reformers meant by Grace Alone.

- \*The Bible is a testament to the Grace of God.
- \*From beginning to end the Bible tells the story of how God extends Himself to the world so that creatures can come to know and love him.
- \*Fundamentally God has demonstrated His grace to us in three trinitarian acts of “divine communicative initiative.”

First, God the Father taking historical initiative to reveal himself to Israel through the words of the prophets.

# DEUTERONOMY 7:6-11

Second, God the Son taking  
historical initiative to reveal the  
Father by taking on humanity.

**JOHN 14:1-14**

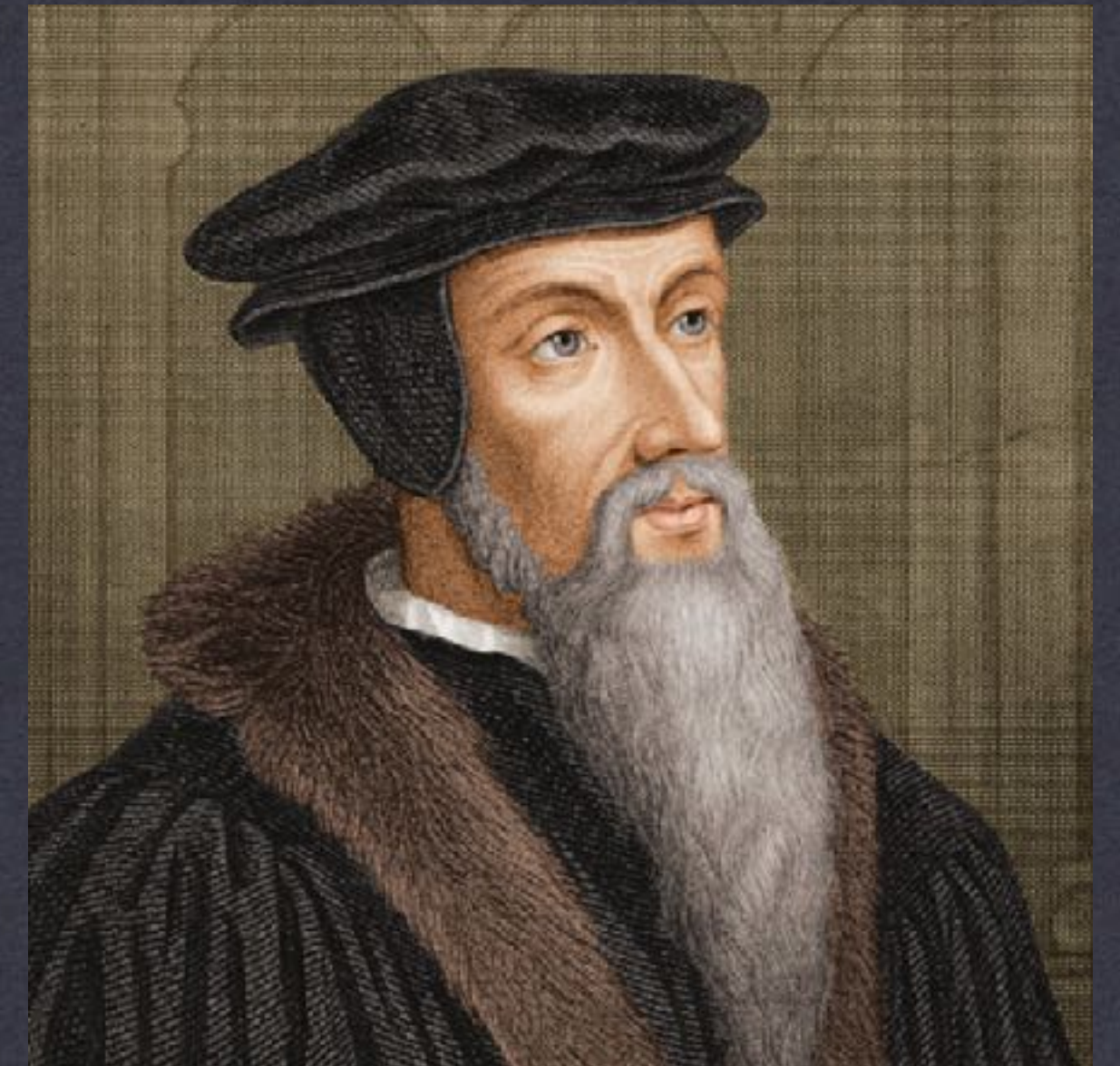
Third, God the Spirit's ongoing initiative to illumine believers by opening their hearts and minds to the living Christ depicted in the pages of Scripture.

**JOHN 16:7-15**

- When we look around at each other this morning, we are not merely people that just happen, for a myriad of reasons, to be congregating here to perform some sort of religious obligation or have a personal spiritual experience.
- Rather, we are people who who have been showered with the Grace of God and have been joined together with Christ.

# Which brings us to the table...

- \* Let us partake of this meal together.
- \* Not as autonomous individuals, just using this time to reflect on a personal decision you might have made or religious feelings you may be experiencing in the moment.
- \* But may we see ourselves as a continuation of the Holy Spirit's work of Grace. As people whose eyes and ears have been opened and whose hearts have been softened to the truth of Scripture and the beauty of the Gospel and who have been joined together into a family of faith.



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