



Our salvation is due to Christ alone! Therefore, all honor and glory belongs to Christ, our Savior! Yet, we sinful humans tend to direct glory and honor toward ourselves. This is because of our sinful nature which is selfish, focused inwardly on ourselves, attempts to justify ourselves before God. Remember how after the fall into sin when God asked Adam “have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” Adam answered “The woman whom you gave to me, she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate.” Immediately, Adam, (now in his sinful nature) shifted the blame to someone else. We continue in this sinful condition, shifting the blame elsewhere, while at the same time trying to “justify ourselves” before God.

God in His great mercy has saved us through Christ Jesus our Savior! Thanks be to God! To God alone be all the glory! In His great mercy, He sent His Son to be the propitiation (**1 John 2:2**) for our sin, to die and rise for us to give us forgiveness, life and salvation through the works and merit of Christ alone!

The Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that we are saved by grace alone through faith in Christ our Savior. We do not merit favor by the good works we do. Instead we are saved by God's grace. Our salvation is entirely dependent on Christ alone by what He has accomplished on the cross and in His victorious resurrection on the third day, which vanquished sin, death and the power of the devil!

Dr. C.F. W. Walther, (the first President of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) wrote about the “Justification Of The Sinner By Grace Alone Through Faith In Jesus Christ Without Any Merit Of Works” that we sinners are justified by God's grace through faith in Christ with no works of our own. **Ephesians 2:8-9** makes this very clear that God's grace gives to us the gift of faith; then faith believes and clings to Jesus and His work of Redemption/Salvation done for us on His cross to give us forgiveness of sins.

Sadly, just as Adam revealed his sinful nature in answering God's question in the Garden after the fall into sin, we too, because of our inherited sinful nature, gravitate toward “promoting our good works” before the Lord to the exclusion of Christ's work on the cross in order to “justify ourselves before God. We have been studying Article V from The Apology (Defense) Of The Augsburg Confession” during Sunday morning Bible Class. The Article deals with “Love And The Fulfilling The Law.” We learn in our study that it is Christ alone who fulfills God's Law wholly and completely for us through His life, death, and resurrection. Because of our sinful nature, however, we often fail to realize this, while at the same time we try to elevate ourselves in God's sight trying to merit His favor with our works.

Dr. C.F. W. Walther writes on this issue so we would understand the extent of God's mercy for us given in Christ our Savior. **“The real reason for our justification is Christ. Faith itself is not a work, but only an instrument, we are to contribute nothing because we can contribute nothing, not even faith....As soon as one ascribes to man the least part in the work of salvation, one robs God.”**

To claim “good works” as something we humans do to contribute toward our salvation is to “rob God of all His glory” which also empties the cross of its meaning and work. God is a merciful and loving God, who in great mercy rescues us from sin, death and eternal punishment through the merits, work and worthiness of Christ. He justifies us before Him entirely by the work of redemption accomplished by Jesus on His cross and in His resurrection.

October reminds Lutherans and all Christians who believe in “justification by faith by God's grace” that God's unlimited mercy and grace is what saves sinners, not our own works. We are reminded of this by the cross that is before us in worship services; in the Baptismal font teaching us that we are baptized into Christ from God's grace; and we are given Christ's very body and blood at the Altar bestowing on us the forgiveness of sins earned by our Savior's sacrificial death. Therefore, as Dr. Walther reminds us; “All Glory To God Alone” for He alone offers, delivers and accomplishes our salvation in Jesus Christ His Son. During the month of October, as we move toward the celebration of the Reformation, may we remember well that all glory belongs to God who in His great love for us in Christ, provides our salvation through Grace that gives us life everlasting.

**All glory be to God alone,                      Forevermore the highest one  
Who did our sinful race befriend      And grace and peace to us extend.  
Among us may His gracious will      All hearts with deep thanksgiving fill.**

LSB 948 “All Glory Be To God Alone” stanza 1

A most blessed month of the Reformation to you all!  
In Christ, Pastor Ahrendt