

### 3. 'In Christ alone', (*Solus Christus*)

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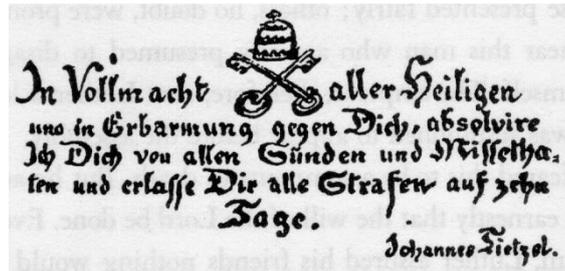
#### Introduction: Who will rescue me from this body of death?

#### 1. *Solus Christus*: Jesus, the Perfect Priest, is the only mediator

- "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus"  
(1 Tim. 2:5)
  
- "<sup>10</sup>And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.<sup>11</sup>Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup>But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup>and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. <sup>14</sup>For by one sacrifice he has made perfect for ever those who are being made holy." (Heb. 10:10-14)
  
- "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" (John 14:6)

## 2. Solus Christus: Reformation Battlegrounds

- Indulgences



33. Men must especially be on guard against those who say that the pope's pardons are that inestimable gift of God, by which man is reconciled to him.

[He's saying this papal pardon doesn't get you salvation]

36. Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters.

37. Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church; and this is granted him by God, even without indulgence letters. (Luther 95 Theses)

- Priests and the Mass

"..It is a most wicked infamy and unbearable blasphemy, both against Christ, and against the sacrifice which he made for us through his death on the cross, for anyone to suppose that by repeating the oblation [offering] he obtains pardon for sins, appeases God, and acquires righteousness....We also deny that they are a priest, in the sense that they, by such oblation, intercede before God for the people and, having appeased God, obtain atonement for sins. For Christ is the sole Pontiff [Pope] and Priest of the New Testament (cf. Heb. 9) to whom all priesthoods have been transferred and in whom they have been closed and terminated...."

- Prayers to the Saints

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

...."But if we appeal to the consciences of all those who delight in the intercession of the saints, we shall find that this arises solely from the fact that they are burdened by anxiety; just as if Christ were insufficient or too severe. First, by this perplexity they dishonour Christ and strip him of the title of sole mediator which, as it has been given to him by the Father, as a unique privilege, ought not to be transferred to another. Also, by this very thing they obscure the glory of his birth and make void the cross; in fine, they strip and deprive of its praise all that he has done or suffered! For all these things lead to the conclusion that he alone is, and is to be deemed, The Mediator." (Calvin Institutes (3:20:21 p878-9))

### 3. *Solus Christus*: Its relevance yesterday, today and forever

- **Rejoicing in that happy certainty**

Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

A. That I am not my own,  
but belong body and soul,  
in life and in death  
to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,  
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.  
He also watches over me in such a way  
that not a hair can fall from my head  
without the will of my Father in heaven;  
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.  
Because I belong to him,  
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
assures me of eternal life  
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready  
from now on to live for him.

- **Connecting and Confronting our culture with Christ Alone**

*“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.”  
(Acts 8:35, KJV)*

i) Christ Alone means we must be realistic about ‘religion’ and ‘spirituality’ and ‘searching’

It is accordingly no easier for sinners to accept God’s revelation in nature than to accept God’s revelation in Scripture. They are no more ready of themselves to do the one than to do the other. From the point of view of the sinner, theism is as objectionable as Christianity. Theism that is worthy of the name is Christian theism. Christ said that no man can come to the Father but by him. No one can become a theist unless he becomes a Christian. Any God that is not the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is not God but an idol. It is therefore the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts that alone effects the required Copernican revolution and makes us both Christians and theists.<sup>1</sup>

ii) Christ Alone is the answer to the world we all want.

*Question:* Given that we are all exclusive, which set of exclusive beliefs produces peaceful, loving, reconciling behaviour which can give us hope in a hope-less world?

*Answer:* the *unique good* news of Christ Alone

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<sup>1</sup> Cornelius Van Til, ‘Nature and Scripture,’ in *The Infallible Word: A Symposium*, eds., N.B. Stonehouse and Paul Woolley (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1946), 280.

1 John 4:1-12:

- *origin* of Jesus' salvation – 'come from God' - somewhere else – other religions, human founder - God himself
- *purpose* of Jesus' salvation – 'come in the flesh' – transformation – liberation – escape – redeem this world – get rid of what is wrong with the world. Christianity gives hope for 'this' world – what salvation
- *method* of Jesus' salvation – 'not that we loved God but that he loved us' in other religions – perform the truth – can't do it – v. 10 Christian method opposite – Jesus is not mainly a teacher, but a saviour –
  
- Christians know they are not saved because they are good – they are to be humble (not about performance)
- Christians know they are to serve others because God's creation matters (resurrection shows this)
- Christians know that a self-sacrificing God must lead to self-sacrificing followers (not self-righteous)

- **They think it's all over.....The Continuing Priestly work of Christ.**

i) Christ's constant comfort to us (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:14, 15)

ii) Christ's intercession for us (Heb. 7:25)

- **The priesthood of all believers and the dignity of 'secular' vocations**

We see that our whole salvation and all its parts are comprehended in Christ. We should therefore take care not to derive the least portion of it from anywhere else.

If we seek salvation, we are taught by the very name of Jesus that it is "of him."

If we seek any other gifts of the Spirit, they will be found in his anointing.

If we seek strength, it lies in his dominion;

if purity, in his conception;

if gentleness, it appears in his birth. For by his birth he was made like us in all respects that he might learn to feel our pain.

If we see redemption, it lies in his passion;

if acquittal, in his condemnation;

if remission of the curse, in his cross;

if satisfaction, in his sacrifice;

if purification, in his blood;

if reconciliation, in his descent into hell;

if mortification of the flesh, in his tomb;

if newness of life, in his resurrection;

if immortality, in the same;

if inheritance of the Heavenly Kingdom, in his entrance into heaven;

if protection, if security, if abundant supply of all blessings, in his Kingdom;

if untroubled expectation of judgment, in the power given him to judge.

In short, since rich store of every kind of good abounds in him, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other. (Calvin, *Inst.*, II.xvi.19)