

Five Solas: A sociological review of the primary dogmas of Protestantism

Supplemental material for
Sociology of religion: A critical primer

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Footnotes:

1. A sample of some, not all, of the Biblical quotes that support the theological argument in question.
2. Horton, Michael S. 1994, March / April. "Reformation Essentials - Five Pillars of the Reformation." *Modern Reformation*, 3(2):12-19.
3. According to Horton, "Many critics of the Reformation have attempted to portray it as the invitation to individualism, as people discover for themselves from the Bible what they will and will not believe. "Never mind the church. Away with creeds and the church's teaching office! We have the Bible and that's enough." But this was not the reformers' doctrine of sola Scriptura--only Scripture. Luther said of individualistic approaches to the Bible, "That would mean that each man would go to hell in his own way.""

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Theological Principle / English translation	Biblical source(s) of the argument(s) ¹	Prof. Horton's interpretation ²	Manifest	Latent	Biblical source(s) of some the counter arguments
sola Scriptura / "by Scripture alone" ³	2 Timothy 3:16	"Our Only Foundation"	To place the Protestant Bible (OT = 39 & NT = 27) as ultimate authority in Christianity and reject the Catholic Church's (i.e., its traditions, councils, Popes, etc.) claim of being the sole interpreter and/or definer of Scripture. According to some, the whole Christian world, including the laity, must be included in the interpretation of Scripture. To others, the Scripture must be interpreted through itself to demonstrate a unified system of truth.	The sacred texts of other religions and other religious traditions cannot tell us anything about how to interact with the Divine and, therefore, must be rejected.	Matt. 16:15-19
sola Fide / "by faith alone"	Romans 1:17	"Our Only Means"	To reject the Catholic Church's claim that Salvation is achieved through Faith and Good Works. Protestantism argues that due to Christ's perfect Sacrifice, God's pardon of sinners is granted to and received by Faith alone. For some, Good Works are interpreted as evidence of Saving Faith.	The emphasis of social action (be religious or secular) shifts away from orthopraxy (correct conduct) to orthodoxy (correct belief).	Matt. 7:12-20; James 2:14-17
sola Gratia / "by grace alone"	Romans 3:24; Eph. 2:8-9	"Our Only Method"	To reject the Catholic Church's claim that the Seven Sacraments are viable methods of attaining Grace.	All other religious methods of attaining Grace are rejected. Acts 8:14-17, 9:17, & 19:6-12.	Matt. 28:19; Mark 6:13 & 10:6-9; John 6:53-59; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Hebrews 6:2; James 4:6 & 5:14-16; 1 John 1:9
solus Christus / "by Christ alone"	John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ex. 20:4-5	"Our Only Mediator"	To reject the Catholic Church's claim that Holy Spirit, the Communion of Saints, and/or the Catholic Church's Apostolic succession play a role in our Salvation. In short, a rejection of the Intercession of Saints.	No other mediator — except Jesus the Christ (the High Priest of and for Christianity) — plays a role in our Salvation.	Rev. 5:8; Romans 1:7
solus Deo Gloria / "glory to God alone"	Romans 11:36 and 15:20	"Our Only Ambition"	To reject the Catholic Church's claim that the Glory (i.e., manifestation of God's presence) extends to Jesus' apostles, their successors, and/or the Communion of Saints. In short, a rejection, in a round about way, the practice of Canonization.	No Saint exists outside of the Bible and any claim that someone is a saint, must be rejected.	John 17:20-23; Luke 20:34-38; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Acts 9:13-32; Ephesians 4:12.