cleanse those who draw near to worship. The issue here is that it is taught by Rome and suggests to the people of the church that sins that they have now committed have not yet been covered by the Blood of Christ until it is reapplied in the “Eucharist.” Now this idea **severely undermines the work of Christ as our priest** and violates the biblical teaching that Christ was offered **“once for all time”** and that in this He did in fact atone for all the sins of all of His people, and that through this **“one sacrifice”** has **“perfected forever”** those who trust Him by faith.

**Hebrews 10:10-15** - 10 By this will we **have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**
11 And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; 12 but He, **having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time,** sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. 14 For **by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** NASB

But the Roman Church maintains that Christ must be “re-sacrificed” again and again in order for the sins of worshippers to be cleansed. This is why they hold the “Mass” daily. Again this **undermines the sufficiency of the atonement** which Christ has accomplished.

**Hebrews 7:26-27** - 26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 **who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.** NASB

**Hebrews 9:25-26** - 25 nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; **but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.** NASB

**Purgatory** – The Roman Catechism states… “All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect”… (from the Roman Catechism http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P2N.HTM#$1BY) Now consider what is being implied in this teaching. It surely says that it is possible for a Christian to die in a state “imperfectly purified,” and that they need to “undergo purification in order to achieve the holiness necessary to enter heaven.” Again we have a doctrine that **severely undermines the sufficiency of the atonement** that Christ has accomplished. The clear denial of the Gospel here is evident to all. Does the believer in Christ need to “achieve the holiness necessary” through the torment of flames, or has it been achieved by Christ already by His death on the Cross? Let us hear God’s commentary on this matter…..

**Colossians 1:21-22** - 21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22 yet **He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.** NASB

**Hebrews 10:14** - 14 For **by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** NASB

**1 Corinthians 1:30-31** - 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.” NASB

**Ephesians 1:7** - 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, NASB

Consider how this **undermines the love and mercy of God held out in the Gospel.** Shall our loving heavenly Father call us to repentance and faith and then cast us into the flames of purification so that we can be adequately tormented for our sins?

**Romans 5:8-10** - 8 But **God demonstrates His own love toward us,** in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died **for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood,** we shall be **saved from the wrath of God** through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.** NASB

Further, how long is long enough in the fire to atone for sins? I tell you one sin is worthy of eternal fire with no hope of ever escaping, but Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law.

Questions? shaansloan@att.net www.heavenslight.org
Romans 8:1-2 - 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. NASB

Indulgences - The Roman Catechism states… “An indulgence is the remission before God of temporal punishment for sins whose guilt is already forgiven, which a properly disposed member of the Christian faithful gains under certain and defined conditions by the assistance of the Church which as minister of redemption dispenses and applies authoritatively the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. Can. 993 An indulgence is partial or plenary insofar as it partially or totally frees from the temporal punishment due to sins”….. Again we see the sufficiency of the atonement severely undermined as we still have “temporal punishment due to sins” to be paid. The obvious question here; Did Christ’s sacrifice put away sins once for all believers, or not? This is an obvious denial of essential Christian doctrine.

Hebrews 9:26 - 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, NASB

Do we have redemption through blood of Christ? Are our sins really covered or is there a further price to be paid? Shall we now buy the forgiveness of sins with money or suffering? This is exactly what the doctrine of indulgences teaches. More than this, the way in which this teaching was used to garner money from the poor peasants during the time of the Reformation was reprehensible. Consider a brief excerpt from a popular online encyclopedia…. “The false doctrine and scandalous conduct of the “pardoners” were an immediate occasion of the Protestant Reformation. In 1517, Pope Leo X offered indulgences for those who gave alms to rebuild St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The aggressive marketing practices of Johann Tetzel in promoting this cause provoked Martin Luther to write his Ninety-Five Theses, protesting against what he saw as the purchase and sale of salvation. In Thesis 28 Luther objected to a saying attributed to Tetzel: “As soon as a coin in the coffer rings, a soul from purgatory springs“…. Here we have the church selling forgiveness to common people in order to raise funds to build an earthly temple of astounding cost and grandeur for the great Pontif to inhabit. I will appeal to your conscience, is something wrong with this picture? What does the Scripture say?

1 Peter 1:18-21 - 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. 20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. NASB

We could go on for some time discussing the many ways in which the Roman Church has and is denying the sufficiency of the person and work of Christ to save us from sins and bring us to God. There are many more fundamental denials of Christ’s work in such doctrines as….

- Penance
- Veneration of Mary and the Saints and prayers being offered to them
- Confessional
- Relics

These and many more were the occasion of the Protest. This is what the Protestants have taken issue with the Roman Church over. It is no small matter. During the time of the Reformation all these things had culminated in a very grievous and unbiblical system of religion which sparked a rebellion against the Roman Church from which the Gospel has gone out as clearly and brightly as the noonday sun. This is because the central issues of the Gospel were at stake in the heart of the Reformation controversy. You see, most of these issues center around the issue of Justification. What is it that justifies us in the sight of God, and how is that justification applied to our life? In other words, how is a person saved from sins and reconciled to God? These matters are summed up biblically in the understanding of the doctrine of Justification. So what is it that the Reformers were saying in response to these matters? Let us consider this.

Questions? shaansloan@att.net www.heavenslight.org
The Pillars of Reformation teaching - The Five Solas

As the protest took shape in the 16th Century, the issues became more and more clearly defined. When the Reformers sought to clarify the main tenants of the Protest, they developed a few phrases or slogans to point to the main theological issues that were at stake. These became known as the “five solas.” The Latin word “sola” is translated “only” or “alone” in English. The “five solas” articulated five fundamental beliefs of the Protestant Reformation in contrast to those of the Roman Church to which they were protesting. These five summarized what they saw as the fundamental principles of Christian life and faith.

The Five “Solas” of the Protestant Reformation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sola Scriptura</th>
<th>Scripture ONLY is the final rule of Christian life, faith and practice. It is clear, sufficient and self-interpreting.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sola Christus</td>
<td>Christ is the ONLY mediator between God and man. Christ’s person and work alone are sufficient to save.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sola Gratia</td>
<td>God’s grace ONLY is the origin of salvation. All elements of salvation are an unmerited gift from God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sola Fide</td>
<td>The ONLY means of Justification is faith, apart from works of the Law. Faith alone appropriates salvation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soli Deo Gloria</td>
<td>To God ONLY belongs the glory for salvation. This alone is to be our motivation for life and worship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not only did these five fundamental principles summarize the Reformation protest, but they also clearly define the fundamental principles of salvation and Christian faith. These clearly summarize the Gospel message and point to the heart of the issues at stake in the Gospel. This happened because the Roman Church had over a long period of time moved away from the Gospel and the person and work of Christ was no longer central to the life and practice of the Church. This resulted in the pompous display of man-made religion, with all of its rites and traditions, which religion the Reformers were formally protesting. The result theologically was a clarification of the main tenants of the Christian Faith and a renewed focus on the heart of the Gospel message, the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Sola Scriptura – The Scripture alone is the final rule of Christian life, faith and practice. It is clear and self-interpreting. The issue here of course was in contrast to the Roman teaching that the Church (tradition and the fathers) was the final authority of faith and practice. More than this, they taught that only the Church and the Priesthood could rightly interpret the Scripture because it was inaccessible to the common man. Sola Scriptura clearly meant that not only was the Scripture (not the Church), the final rule of faith and practice, but that it could be understood by the common man (not only a special priesthood) because it was clear (perspicuous) and understandable because the Holy Spirit could interpret the meaning to each believer. Not only this but Sola Scriptura also meant that the Bible was a “complete” revelation of God, in its closed “canon,” and that it was “sufficient” to address all matters in Christian life and to explain to us what we are to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.
**Sola Christus** – Christ is the only mediator between God and man. Christ’s person and work alone are sufficient to save. More than this, Jesus Christ is the only “incarnate” self-revelation of God who has come and explained God to us. He is the “object of faith” and the focal point of all of human history. This of course was in contrast to the special priesthood of the Roman Church and the teaching that only the Church could explain or reveal God to the people. Christ Himself, His person and His work ONLY have sufficient merit to “justify” us before God and provide a “righteousness” (Rom 3:21-24) for us (not our own, Phil 3:9) that is complete in the sight of God. His life and death are the basis on which the believer is justified (it cannot be merited by good works, Eph 2:8-9), and this is absolutely necessary in the sight of God (John 14:6), being the only sufficient grounds for justification by God. Christ and His teaching are the only way to God, the only true revelation of God in history, and the only Redeemer of mankind.

**Sola Gratia** – God’s grace only is the origin of salvation. All elements of salvation are an unmerited gift from God. God is the One who has reconciled us to Himself, having planned, purchased and applied (Trinity implied) salvation to each individual believer. He is the One who predestines, calls, justifies, sanctifies and glorifies. In short, salvation is wholly the work of God, from first to last, its origin and completion is His work. Therefore, salvation is “not merited” by any work of man nor can it be, in any sense, merited by anything we can do. This of course was in contrast to the Roman teaching of Merit, Indulgences, Purgatory and the like. We cannot work for or buy salvation, nor can we suffer long enough in Purgatory in order to purge sin from us. Rather, salvation is the “free gift” (Rom 6:23) of God, “not of works” (Eph 2:9), and justification is a “gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24).

**Sola Fide** – The only means of Justification is faith, apart from works of the Law. Faith alone appropriates salvation. This of course was in contrast to the Roman teaching that justification is complete only after we have become righteous in our own persons, through faith AND perseverance in good works to the end of life. The Bible clearly teaches that salvation cannot be earned or merited in any way by people (Eph 2:8-9), but that it is a free gift from God’s good pleasure (Rom 5:16-17) to give it. Further that Christ’s righteousness alone is sufficient as merit before God in order to justify a person, being the only Redeemer (Eph 1:7) and full payment for sin and Provider of righteousness having fulfilled the Law in His perfect life (Rom 10:4). Therefore, Justification, indeed reconciliation to God can only be appropriated to us by faith alone (Rom 5:1), which object is Christ alone (Rom 5:9), and this comes as a gift by God’s grace (Rom 3:24) alone to us. There is no other means of justification but faith (Rom 3:28), and this is “apart from the works of the Law.”

**Soli Deo Gloria** - To God only belongs the glory for salvation. This alone is to be our motivation for life and worship. Because salvation is wholly the work of God, from first to last, it is to God alone that glory and worship is to be given (Rom 11:36). This is in contrast of course to the Roman teaching of Papal exaltation, and the veneration of Mary and the Saints. Salvation is something God gives as a free gift and He is to be acknowledged as the sole provider of it. The exaltation of people, even the best of saints, is a diabolical form of idolatry which is wrongfully robbing God’s glory from Him (Rev 19:10, 22:8-9). Rather, if someone is a great saint, we should rightly be thankful for their good service in the Church, but God alone is to be glorified and venerated for working such grace in that saint. Moreover, the only right motive for worship, service and good works is in fact to glorify God (Matt 5:16) so that in our worship of God people might see Him (Phil 2:15-16) and His glory and virtue would shine through our life as a witness (1 Pet 2:9) to God’s good virtue, which is in us only because of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22).