



Links Players

Five Solas - Christ Alone

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace, you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1-8, ESV)

I've long been stubborn about submitting to a Trackman session. I wasn't ready to see all my imperfections and was somewhat skeptical about the "scientific approach" to swing analysis.

Of course, a pro was there to explain the raw data of "smash factor," "ball speed," "club-head speed," and "angle of attack." Ultimately, I am glad I overcame all my pitiful excuses against subjecting my swing to quantifiable data.

It was eye-opening, to be sure; it was also incredibly painful to be disabused of so many false ideas. However, in this confrontation with the truth about swing path, swing speed, and how far I carry the ball, I was, ironically, relieved and strongly encouraged.

Disregarding or avoiding the inevitable conflict with the truth about one's swing is one thing; disregarding the truth about the larger issue of one's life is naïve and ultimately harmful.

To cut to the chase, we must focus on Jesus Christ because he, and he alone, is the sole answer to our many issues. He, and he alone, properly diagnoses what is fundamentally wrong with us, and he alone heals our broken lives.

A survey of Scripture reveals we are deeply flawed. In today's verses, we are confronted with some "tough love." Apart from Jesus, we are spiritually dead, enslaved to the forces of darkness, captive to false ideologies, ruled by life-destroying passions, and under God's wrath. This is the real "come to Jesus meeting."

Simultaneous to this "unsettling news," the "good news" is declared with breathtaking clarity: God is rich in mercy, loves us, makes us alive, saves us, raises us, and seats us in heaven. And he did all this to spend eternity showing us his immeasurable kindness.

But the thing to notice in all these immeasurable benefits is that they can be ours only because of Christ Jesus and him alone!

The life of God in a man's soul is because of Jesus—he alone raises dead men to life! Forgiveness of sin is because Jesus alone satisfied God's justice—Christ took our punishment. Deliverance from the tyranny of Satan (he is real) is because Jesus alone defeated him at the Cross.

Only our Maker can accurately assess and heal the human condition; hence, the exclusive answer to the penalty of sin, shame, corruption, deception, and judgment is the one he has offered—Jesus Christ and him alone.

I have a friend who is a truly remarkable player. A few years back, he went deep into his hip pocket to attend a week-long camp with a famous "short game guru." He came home with 12 "concerns" regarding putting. Sadly, the solutions offered didn't help.

The difference between that sad scenario and the bad news God tells us about ourselves is that, unlike that expensive short-game guru, Jesus alone can and will solve all our issues.

Prayer: Jesus, "...send out your light and truth and let them lead us to your holy hill."

READING: Ephesians 2:1-8; Hebrews 1:1-4; John 14:1-7; Philippians 3:1-14

1. Who has been centrally influential in your life regarding golf: Dad, Mom, Club Pro, or Golf Coach? Recall and discuss why with some personal stories.

2. Mine these texts and see how Jesus Christ is the exclusive mediator of all God's blessings.

3. Hebrews 1:1-4 gives several details about the greatness of Jesus Christ. What are some appropriate responses he deserves from us?
