

# youthESource Bible Study

## Alones, but Never Alone

### Part Two: Faith and Grace Alone - Leader's Guide

by Sara Borgstede

#### Overview:

Q: What are the "Alones" of the church?

A: *Sola* is the Latin word for Alone. Five phrases came from writings during the Protestant Reformation (the time during and after Martin Luther), based on teaching throughout Scripture, to explain their beliefs.

The Five Solas (or "Alones") are:

- *Sola Fide*, by faith alone.
- *Sola Scriptura*, by Scripture alone.
- *Solus Christus*, through Christ alone.
- *Sola Gratia*, by grace alone.
- *Soli Deo Gloria*, glory to God alone.

This three-part study (Part One: Scripture & Christ alone, Part Two: Faith & Grace Alone, Part Three: Glory to God alone) will explore each *Sola* and offer a modern-day application for teens.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

#### Introduction:

*Read introduction aloud together.*

"It's not fair!"

I have five children ranging in age from 5 to 18 years old, so the cry of, "It's not fair," rings through my house quite often. Actually, it's usually shorted to the more simple, "No fair!" When a sibling gets more computer time, a favorite toy has to be shared or one child gets to go on an outing with me or my husband, as a mom I often hear, "No fair!"

Adults often say kids and teens are the ones who want life to be fair, but the truth is we grown-ups want life to be fair too. We are a tad bit more sophisticated in the way we talk about it, but discussions about the injustice of illegal immigrants receiving government healthcare, getting a speeding ticket when "the guy next to me was going just as fast and got away" or complaining about extra work being piled on us at our jobs when a coworker slacks off – all of these are our own adult version of saying the same thing. "No fair!"

We want and often expect life to be fair. You might have a teacher or parent who tells you, "Life isn't fair. Don't expect it to be." This is true. Life isn't fair and won't be fair.

It's not totally wrong to want things to be fair, though. God says he is a just God (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9). We are created with a moral conscious and the Holy Spirit in us directs us to know right from wrong. We are called upon to help others in the world who need it, too (James 1:27).

My husband and I have told our children we will try to parent them as *fairly* as possible, but we will not parent them the *same*. There is a difference. Each of our kids is unique and has different needs. To parent them exactly the same way really would not be fair.

Discuss:

Do you think it's possible for parents to treat their children differently but fairly? Why or why not? Give some examples to support your belief.

*Answers will vary. Some students may think children need to be treated equally to be fair. Accept this answer as it has some merit. Others may see the benefit to treating children differently. For example one child may be doing his best and receive Cs on his report card as his best work. Another may be able to earn As as his best work.*

What in your personal life feels most unfair? Why?

*Answers will vary. Could be situations with school, parents, siblings, work, etc.*

### **Digging Deeper**

*Note: Depending on the age, maturity, and understanding of your group of students, this could be an emotional topic. Some students may have a much wider grasp of world events than others. Be sensitive to the possible wide range of maturity levels and fears this topic could evoke. Be sure to end the session with a positive reminder that we have assurance that God is in control.*

*Because of where teens are developmentally, they have a strong sense of justice. This is a great topic for them to explore and an opportunity for you as an important adult to speak God's truth into their lives at a critical time in their spiritual maturity.*

What do you see going on in the world today, both in your country and in other countries that is unfair and unjust? Write your answers on the globe below. Brainstorm some of your ideas for what can be done to change these unjust situations.



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(Source: [www.openclipart.org](http://www.openclipart.org))

God's view: Turn to Ephesians 2:4-10. Read through the section once out loud then answer the questions below.

Let's start with vs. 5. What was our condition before God saved us? \_\_\_\_\_

Think about "It's not fair!" What did we deserve because of our sin? \_\_\_\_\_

What does that mean then for all the other unfairness in life?

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Read vs. 8 and fill in the blanks (ESV) "**For by \_\_\_\_\_ you have been saved through \_\_\_\_\_.**"

What does the rest of the verse go on to explain? (Who is doing the work?) \_\_\_\_\_

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You might be thinking, yes, okay, by grace, through faith, I've heard this before...but this is one of the most important concepts you will ever learn in your whole life. This is more important than any academics you will learn in school (gasp!), more important than any chores or manners or anything I can teach my kids as a parent. This is the heart of what really matters, and it all comes down to this -- life is not fair in the very best of ways. God was NOT fair with us. He gave us what we did NOT deserve. He gave us Jesus.

The two *Solas* we are studying today are all about how God was not fair with us. He didn't give us what we deserve, which is hell and death. Instead he gave us Jesus and life.

- *Sola Gratia*, by grace alone.
- *Sola Fide*, by faith alone.

This is what sets Christianity apart from every other religion out there. We believe salvation is a free gift and there is nothing we can do to earn it. All other religions teach, in some way or fashion, that you have to do something to earn your salvation. *Sola Gratia* and *Sola Fide* are our way of saying Free Gift! No fair!

Look again at the picture of the world above. There are many painful, heartbreaking, and scary situations going on even as you are reading this. Our world is broken because of sin. Some people believe there is no God, or God does not love us, because of the pain in the world.

How would you answer people who have these beliefs?

What does God say about the pain in the world?

There are so many people in your life who need to hear what you have to tell them about God, unfairness and Jesus' saving grace. Don't wait. Your time is now.

### **Closing Activity:**

Read the following passages and write them on top of or around the globe:

2 Corinthians 5:19

John 16:33

Psalm 29:11

## **Closing Thought**

Many leaders believe more Christians are being martyred for their faith today than ever before in the history of the world. Check out <http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/statement-on-christian-persecution-in-iraq> for ways you can pray and help.

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