

# From Rome to Reformation: The Key Issues Then & Now



# The Five *Solas* of the Reformation

- *Sola Scriptura* – our ultimate authority is not tradition, popes, or councils but the Scripture alone.
- *Solus Christus* – God justifies us not based on our own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ alone.
- *Sola Fide* – God justifies us not because of any human works of any kind, but by faith alone.
- *Sola Gratia* – we are saved from God's wrath not by our personal merit or initiative, but by sovereign grace alone.
- *Soli Deo Gloria* – God created and redeemed us in such a way that we would receive none of the glory, but the glory would be for God alone.

# I. What Is the Ultimate Source of Authority?

**Council of Trent:** "(this Synod) receives and venerates with an **equal affection of piety, and reverence**, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament...as also the said [that is, unwritten, oral] traditions."



# I. What Is the Ultimate Source of Authority?

**RCC Catechism (1994):** "82 - As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. **Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.**"



# I. What Is the Ultimate Source of Authority?

**RCC Catechism (1994):** 85 "The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ." **This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome."**

# I. What Is the Ultimate Source of Authority?

**Luther:** "Everyone, indeed, knows that at times they [the fathers] have erred as men will; therefore, I am ready to trust them only when they prove their opinions from **Scripture, which has never erred.**"

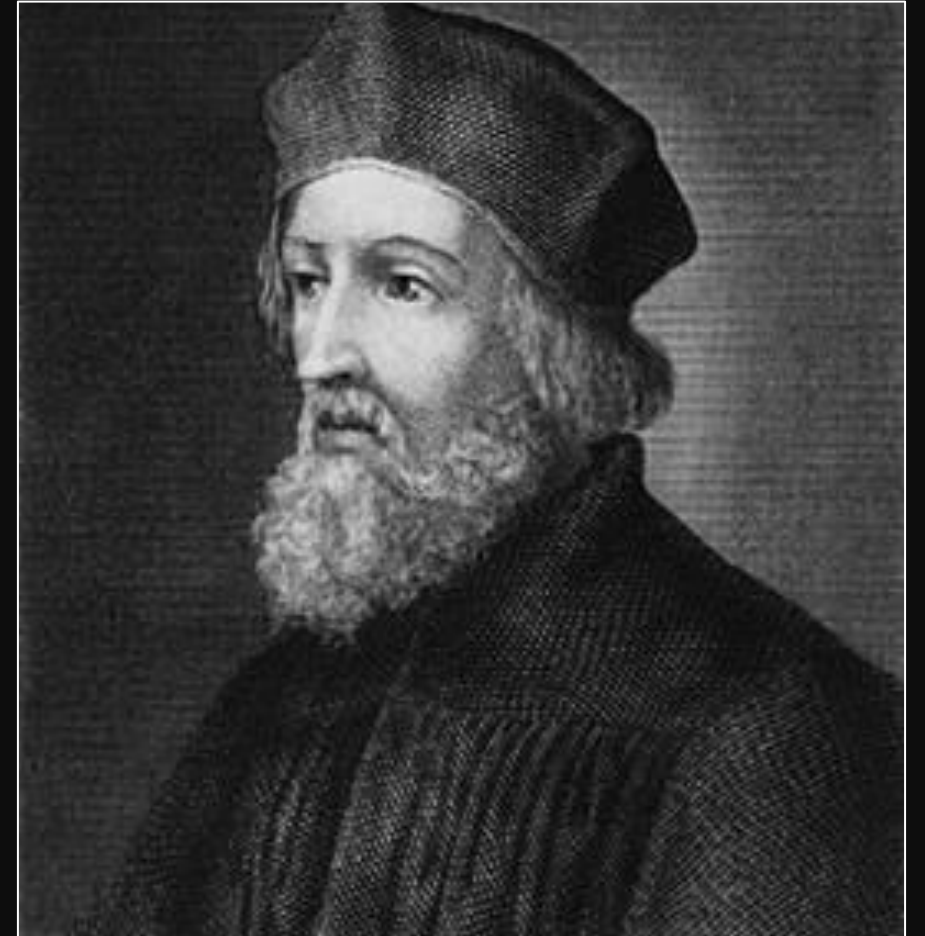
## II. Who Is the Head of Church?

### The RCC teaches...

Pope Boniface in the papal bull, *Unam Sanctam* (1302):  
“Consequently we declare, state, define, and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff.”

# Jan Huss

“If the papal utterances agree with the law of Christ, they are to be obeyed. If they are at variance with it, then Christ’s disciples must stand loyally and manfully with Christ against all papal bulls whatsoever and be ready, if necessary, to endure malediction and death. When the pope uses his power in an unscriptural way, to resist him is not a sin, it is a mandate.”





# Martin Luther

“The chief cause that I fell out with the pope was this: the pope boasted that he was the head of the church, and condemned all that would not be under his power and authority.... Further he took upon him power, rule, and authority over the Christian church, and over the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God; [claiming that] no man must presume to expound the Scriptures, but only he, and according to his ridiculous conceits; so that he made himself lord over the church. ... I am persuaded that if at this time, St. Peter, in person, should preach all the articles of Holy Scripture, and only deny the pope’s authority, power, and primacy, and say, that the pope is not the head of all Christendom, they would cause him to be hanged..”

# III. How Is a Man Made Right with God?

**Trent** teaches that justification occurs in three stages...

1. Preparation – in adults this involves repentance, faith, and the intention to be baptized.
2. Beginning – baptism; at baptism, God infuses grace “whereby an unjust man actually becomes just.” (Trent)
3. Increase – by obedience and good works.
  - Trent: “through the observance of the commandments of God and the church, faith cooperating with good works,” believers may “increase in that righteousness received through the grace of Christ and are further justified.”

### III. How Is a Man Made Right with God?

**Council of Trent:** "If anyone says that the righteousness received [in justification] is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works, but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, let him be anathema."

### III. How Is a Man Made Right with God?

- **Luther:** "Christian righteousness is not a righteousness that is within us and clings to us, as a quality or virtue does.... But it is an alien righteousness entirely outside us, namely, Christ Himself is ... our essential Righteousness and complete Satisfaction."
- Rom. 5:19; Rom. 10:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9

# The Key Issues Behind the Reformation

1. Scripture Alone is the Ultimate Source of Authority.
2. Christ Alone is the Head of the Church.
3. The Righteousness of Christ Alone is the Ground and Faith Alone is the Means of our Justification.

