

# For the Love of the Truth

## 95 NEW THESES FOR OUR GENERATION

We have entitled these new Theses, “For the Love of the Truth,” because of Martin Luther’s Preface to his 95 Theses:

“*Out of love for the truth and from desire to elucidate it, the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and ordinary lecturer therein at Wittenberg, intends to defend the following statements and to dispute on them in that place. Therefore, he asks that those who cannot be present and dispute with him orally shall do so in their absence by letter. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.*”

In light of the 500th anniversary of the 95 theses, we publish the following new theses for our generation. Our prayer is that these theses will draw you deeper into Holy Scripture so that you might live by faith alone in Christ alone.



### Sola Scriptura

**1** Holy Scripture is God’s written Word. The original autographs are God-breathed, authoritative, clear and inerrant. The Word is wholly sufficient, providing everything essential for life and godliness.

**2** Holy Scripture is the only written Word of God. Therefore, the belief that dreams, voices in one’s head, or strong mental impressions should be proclaimed and heeded as “prophecy” is an ungodly superstition. It has no biblical warrant and is a dangerously foolish way of trying to discern the Lord’s will.

**3** All religious experience must be evaluated in the light of Scripture. This principle must not be reversed.

**4** Since *Prima Scriptura* (Scripture first) sees the Word of God only as primary and not ultimate or sufficient, it must be abandoned in theory and practice. Both Roman Catholics, with their tradition and the Magisterium, as well as Charismatics, with their internal, subjective impressions function under the rubric of *Prima Scriptura*. Instead, *Sola Scriptura* (Holy Scripture alone) must be believed, taught and practiced.

**5** Following in the footsteps of Ulrich Zwingli – who started his ministry with the verse by verse exposition of the Gospel of Matthew – *lectio continua* (sequential exposition), not *lectio selecta* (random selection), should be the principle for the preaching and teaching of God’s Word. This insures God’s people are exposed to the full counsel of God.

**6** While God’s power and wisdom can be clearly seen in nature, only Scripture reveals God as the triune Savior.

**7** Apart from the Holy Spirit’s work, the Word of God remains foolish to the unbeliever.

**8** The person searching for higher knowledge outside of the Bible will never experience the fullness of Christ.

**9** Higher criticism (along with its critique, analogy, and correlation) is not merely an investigative tool for historical research, but it is a worldview grounded in rebellion against God’s deity.

**10** The divinely-ordained means for reaching a hostile world is the proclamation of the gospel—a message that is a major stumbling block to some and is like pure foolishness to others.

**11** Because the Holy Scripture is God’s Word, it is inerrant as God Himself is inerrant. Therefore, no man or church can decree it to be God’s true Word, because that would elevate man’s reason above God.

**12** Inerrancy is not a peculiar teaching or peripheral matter of hermeneutics. Jesus Christ affirmed the Scripture as inerrant.

### Sola Fide

**13** Real faith is not merely an intellectual assent to a bare outline of gospel facts; it entails an earnest trust in Christ as He is offered to us in the gospel.

**14** Saving faith entails knowledge (*notitia*), assent (*assensus*) and trust (*fiducia*).

**15** Authentic faith perseveres.

**16** Faith and faithfulness are not to be equated. Faith has its object, the Lord Jesus Christ. Faithfulness stems from faith in Christ.

**17** Saving faith in Jesus will result in faithfulness in the believer, not vice versa.

**18** Christians will be justified on the last day for the same reason they were justified at their regeneration – by faith alone in the person and work of Jesus Christ. When there is talk about present justification and final justification, the biblical view of justification by faith alone has been lost.

**19** There is no saving knowledge of God apart from believing Jesus Christ.

**20** Saving faith does not hide the sinner’s shame with any human, priestly, religious, or moral fig leaves. Therefore, a true Roman Catholic cannot be a true Christian.

**21** Faith is the only instrument of justification. Faith is not meritorious.

**22** The pursuit of righteousness is a result of imputed righteousness.

**23** Justification by faith alone can never be lost since it is a work of God.

**24** Justification by faith alone is never by the infusing of righteousness, but by the imputation of the sinner’s sin to Christ’s account and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to the believer’s account.

**25** Because the Scripture is all-sufficient to know Christ and believe in Him, we reject the belief that God will bring about salvation in Christ through the sacraments, visions, or dreams.

**26** Faith expects everything from Christ and nothing from itself. It binds itself to the Word of God.

### Sola Gratia

**27** God’s grace is the cause of the redeemed sinner’s faith, not vice versa.

**28** Those who think grace exempts believers from the duty to mortify ungodliness and worldly lusts have not understood the first thing about the grace of our holy God.

**29** Grace is not to be confused with merit in any way. Just as law and gospel are different, grace and merit cannot coexist. Arminianism is a distortion of this difference, no matter how loudly they insist otherwise.

**30** Renewed focus upon grace alone must manifest itself in the highlighting of the One full of grace and truth, Jesus Christ. The mystical impulses to go inward for revelation, must be resisted.

**31** He who grasps grace will extol it as “amazing grace.”

**32** Grace humbles us because it is granted sovereignly and freely.

**33** If your conscience is not troubled when you habitually sin, it is not because you have a superior understanding of grace. It should cause you to examine yourself.

**34** The message of God’s grace is simple and powerful; therefore, it must be faithfully proclaimed, without seeking to please men.

**35** Those who cloak the gospel in costumes of human cleverness diminish its efficacy; they do not enhance it.

**36** Man, in his sinful and fallen nature, will never repent and believe. Man cannot cooperate with God to save himself. God alone saves by grace.

**37** God alone seeks and draws sinners through His Son, who came to save the lost.

**38** God saves monergistically. Salvation is from Him, through Him and to Him alone.

**39** Grace drives individuals toward holiness, goodness, godliness, and righteousness. Without such grace, an authentic change of heart is unattainable.

### Solus Christus

**40** The church must proclaim Christ to every tribe and nation because He is the sinner’s only hope for salvation.

**41** Preaching the written Word needs to highlight the person and work of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word.

**42** Christ, the last Adam, accomplished what no man could. He obtained eternal redemption. Man’s only contribution to salvation is sin.

**43** Saving grace is exclusively found in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Every other religion ends in damnation.

**44** Salvation must be accomplished by Christ. It cannot be achieved by man through works, tradition or religion.

**45** The true dilemma of humanity is not loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, or any of the other personal problems that make him feel like victim rather than transgressor, but it is sin. Therefore, the true human solution is the God-man, Jesus Christ.

**46** At the center of Christ’s death on the cross at Calvary, penal substitution through his shed blood is seen.

**47** Sooner or later every knee will bow before Jesus Christ and confess Him as Lord.

**48** There are only two options for any individual appearing before Christ on Judgment Day: disdainful opposition or loving worship.

**49** By declaring Himself to be the one and only savior, our LORD Jesus Christ uniformly uncovers ancient religions, modern humanism, and postmodern relativism as lies.

**50** Rome continues to teach that pilgrimages, indulgences, and purgatory remit the temporal punishment for sin. None of which are necessary for the true believer because of his union with Christ.

**51** We are blessed in Jesus Christ with every spiritual blessing from heaven. Therefore, “Solus Christus” rules out every “Jesus and...” The Father has given us everything in His Son.

### Soli Deo Gloria

**52** The triune God is glorified perfectly in Himself.

**53** God did not create us because He was bored or lonely; He made us so that He could glorify Himself.

**54** Jesus Christ’s mission on earth in glorifying God was accomplished.

**55** God’s glory embodies everything truly praiseworthy and everything we ought to desire. Therefore, he is more deserving of our wonder, interest, and delight than any earthly charm or pleasure.

**56** Because salvation of the lost and the maturation of the saints are not the work of man, God alone receives all glory.

**57** God is glorified as He simultaneously exercises all of His attributes and perfections. This occurs in creation, providence, and His great salvation.

**58** In his wisdom God rejected man’s wisdom as the means by which He is to be known and glorified. Even “christian” academics should submit to this divine truth.

**59** God deserves glory for his majestic creation that he made in six days by His powerful Word.

**60** The church must embrace the foolishness of the message preached as the sole power given her whereby salvation is attained and God is most exalted.

**61** The pinnacle of a man glorifying God is seen in the obedience and submission of Jesus Christ to His Father.

**62** The goal of Christian evangelism is not to win the approval and appreciation of carnally-minded people, but to glorify God by calling guilty sinners to repentance and faith in Christ alone.

**63** Recent popes, whose chosen titles include “Holy Father,” “the great bridge-builder,” and “the Vicar of Christ,” reside in the same Vatican, wear the same crown, and blaspheme God’s glory to the same degree as their medieval predecessors.

**64** In this age, those who pursue God’s glory and serve the Lord Jesus Christ are required to expose ecumenical seduction and to call those who believe and follow Roman Catholic doctrine to repentance. Love commands evangelism of Roman Catholics as it does evangelism of Jews and Muslims.

**65** God is not a means to an end, so that men might become significant. Rather, man has been created to honor and glorify his Creator.

**66** Salvation is so great and awesome that only God can provide it because it is His offense that must be appeased and His judgment that must be abated. He elects, He calls, He sanctifies, and He glorifies—all to His own glory.

**67** The ultimate goal for discipleship or sanctification is not the alleviation or solution of man’s problems, but the glorification of God.

**68** God is to be glorified in both sacred and secular endeavors because there is no difference between the two.

**69** God has every right to glorify Himself. Man has every obligation to glorify God.

### The Church

As the reformers taught us to always be reforming, we offer the following theses in order that the church might be edified.

**70** The Roman Catholic Church’s claim that they alone are the interpreters of Scripture is false.

**71** The Roman Catholic Church has no mediatorial role in salvation.

**72** The Roman Catholic Church is founded upon human tradition, that is, the Magisterium and the papacy. In doing so she stands against Scripture and denies Jesus Christ the Head of the one true church (ecclesia).

**73** Christians must resist every urge to sinfully collaborate in an unequal yoke with unbelievers even if they recognize abortion, euthanasia and homosexuality as sin. Truth must precede unity.

**74** God’s church must be governed by the wisdom of biblical principles and not by business management or social philosophies.

**75** The church must not charge money for the dispensing of God’s Word in discipleship or counseling. Ministry must not be a way of making profit.

**76** Pastors who labor in preaching and teaching should be financially supported by their local church, when possible, and freed up for their ministry.

**77** The minister’s authority goes no further than the Bible.

**78** Numbers, assets and other measureable statistics must be ignored as litmus tests for true church growth.

**79** The social gospel is too short sighted for Christ’s church. Redemption by the Triune God must be proclaimed. The poor can be fed yet still perish eternally if they are not forgiven.

**80** Christians ought to love their neighbor and do good works. But the mission of the church is not transforming the culture.

**81** The gospel is to be proclaimed by the church. It is the unique message and not a lifestyle to be lived. Jesus is the only one who could live a perfect life and even he made the proclamation his priority in ministry.

**82** The focus of ministry must be God for us, not only God in us.

**83** The church is a pillar and buttress of the truth revealed once and for all in Scripture.

**84** The Greatest Commission was the Son being sent by the Father to give his life for the sheep and to rescue them.

**85** Following her Lord, the church must make disciples according to her great commission.

**86** Making disciples starts with evangelism and continues with training and teaching the whole counsel of God.

**87** Every true believer has the same mandate and privilege, to make more disciples of Jesus Christ. Every believer is in full-time ministry.

**88** Discipleship must include the non-negotiable aspect of training faithful men for the ministry. Elders must see the priority of passing on the ministry baton to faithful men. The future of the local church depends upon it.

**89** The mandate to intentionally disciple every member and to then train faithful men who will be able to teach others ought to be a major focus of every pastor, so that mature men can be sent out to preach and to plant new churches.

**90** A plurality of elders is not one option for church government. It is the only biblical form of shepherding Christ’s church.

**91** So called “satellite churches” must work toward becoming autonomous churches with a plurality of elders.

**92** Video and audio-sermons, recorded or live, will never be a substitute to the preaching of a shepherd who knows his sheep and cares for them as an under-shepherd of Christ.

**93** The church that assumes the gospel in this generation will forget and neglect it in the next.

**94** May the church continue to rest in the grace of God until Jesus Christ returns. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

**95** The church glorified will never tire of proclaiming, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”