



Faith Alone: A Daily Devotional

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Timeless insights from one of the most important people in church history. Some people value good works so much that they overlook faith in Christ. Faith should be first.... It is faith?without good works and prior to good works?that takes us to heaven. We come to God through faith alone. ?Martin Luther Resounding across the centuries, Martin Luther's prolific writings as a pastor, theologian, scholar, Bible translator, father, and more, remain powerful and richly relevant. Faith Alone is a treasury of accessible devotionals taken from Luther's best writings and sermons from the years 1513 through 1546. This carefully updated translation retains the meaning, tone, and imagery of Luther's works. Through daily readings, Luther's straightforward approach challenges you to a more thoughtful faith. Read one brief section a day or explore themes using the subject index in the back of the book. Faith Alone will deepen your understanding of Scripture and help you more fully appreciate the mystery of faith.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

James C. Galvin (EdD), is a former national training director of Youth for Christ (USA), and is now an organizational consultant specializing in strategy, leadership, and change. Dedicated to releasing the potential of leaders and organizations, he has been developing resources for Christian leaders for over twenty years. He and his wife and two children live in Winfield, Illinois.

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Faith Alone Introduction Martin Luther is one of the most important figures in church history because God used him to launch one of the greatest revolutions of all---the Reformation. His writings are nearly five hundred years old yet still meaningful for us to read today. Born in Germany in 1483, Luther studied law at the University of Erfurt. During a violent thunderstorm, he made a dramatic vow to become a monk and soon after entered the Augustinian order. After rigorous academic study and intense, personal struggle to find God's approval, he rediscovered the gospel. He realized that we are saved by faith alone. After he was ordained, he was sent to the University of Wittenburg to teach theology. While there in 1517, he nailed the Ninety-five Theses on the church door to invite a theological debate. The topics he listed caused such a furor that the debate never took place. As Luther continued to write, preach, and teach, he quickly became the leading figure and focal point of the Reformation. Luther was a professor, theologian, former monk, scholar, author, Bible translator, and defender of the faith. But he was also a pastor, husband, father, and good friend to many. Luther was prolific. Besides writing commentaries, theological papers, and letters to friends, his students and followers took careful notes of his university lectures, sermons, and later in life, even his dinner conversations. He died in 1546 at the age of sixty-three. These selections, originally written by Martin Luther between 1513 and 1546, have all been freshly translated into English for this devotional. The goal was to make this edition both accurate and easy to understand. I selected the readings primarily from Luther's sermons, commentaries, and other devotional writings. These selections cover topics both theological and practical. Some of the theological themes you'll find include the centrality of Christ, justification by faith alone, the authority of Scripture, and the importance of putting faith in God above human reason. Practical themes include the struggle against sin and temptation, prayer, humility, the handling of wealth and possessions, the value of everyday work, the importance of marriage and family, and love for neighbor. You may read one selection a day according to the date or explore themes using the subject index located in the back of the book. The verse at the beginning of each reading is usually the one that Luther was writing about or preaching on. At times I've attached a different verse that better fits the theme of the devotional thought. If you want to read more on the topic or view the selection in context, you can locate it in English or German using the index to other editions located in the back of the book. Several talented professionals were

involved in helping to make this devotional a reality. I wish to thank the three translators who worked diligently to capture the meaning, tone, and imagery of Luther: Ric Gudgeon, Gerhard Meske, and Trudy Krucke Zimmerman. I also wish to thank the English stylists who improved each reading and made Luther speak English: Jonathan Farrar and Kristine A. Luber. In addition, Jonathan Farrar worked closely with me on the final editing and provided encouragement along the way. Martin Luther loved God and wanted people to believe in Christ and grow in faith. He forcefully preached and defended the doctrine that we are justified through faith alone---plus nothing. Faith Alone, then, is a fitting title for a devotional based on Luther's writings. May this book point you to the Scriptures and help you understand the importance of faith, appreciate the mystery of faith, and encourage you to grow in faith. James C. Galvin, EdD Faith Comes First For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 You have often heard me say that the Christian life has two dimensions: the first is faith, and the second is good works. A believer should live a devout life and always do what is right. But the first dimension of the Christian life---faith---is more essential. The second dimension---good works---is never as valuable as faith. People of the world, however, adore good works. They regard them to be far higher than faith. Good works have always been valued more highly than faith. Of course, it's true that we should do good works and respect the importance of them. But we should be careful that we don't elevate good works to such an extent that faith and Christ become secondary. If we esteem them too highly, good works can become the greatest idolatry. This has occurred both inside and outside of Christianity. Some people value good works so much that they overlook faith in Christ. They preach about and praise their own works instead of God's works. Faith should be first. After faith is preached, then we should teach good works. It is faith---without good works and prior to good works---that takes us to heaven. We come to God through faith alone. We Live by Faith For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.' Romans 1:17 When I was a monk, I didn't accomplish anything through fasting and prayer. This is because neither I nor any of the other monks acknowledged our sin and lack of reverence for God. We didn't understand original sin, and we didn't realize that unbelief is also sin. We believed and taught that no matter what people do, they can never be certain of God's kindness and mercy. As a result, the more I ran after and looked for Christ, the more he eluded me. When I realized that it was only through God's grace that I would be enlightened and receive eternal life, I worked diligently to understand what Paul said in Romans 1:17---a righteousness from God is revealed in the gospel. I searched for a long time and tried to understand it again and again. But the Latin words for 'a righteousness from God' were in my way. God's righteousness is usually defined as the characteristic by which he is sinless and condemns the sinner. All the teachers except Augustine interpreted God's righteousness as God's anger. So every time I read it, I wished that God had never revealed the gospel. Who could love a God who is angry and who judges and condemns us? Finally, with the help of the Holy Spirit, I took a closer look at what the prophet Habakkuk said: 'The righteous will live by his faith' (Habakkuk 2:4). From this I concluded that life must come from faith. I therefore took the abstract to the concrete level, as we say in school. I related the concept of righteousness to a person becoming righteous. In other words, a person becomes righteous by faith. That opened the whole Bible---even heaven itself---to me!

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ruth Williams:

The book Faith Alone: A Daily Devotional make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting tension or having big problem with the subject. If you can make examining a book Faith Alone: A Daily Devotional for being your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about

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Robert Price:

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