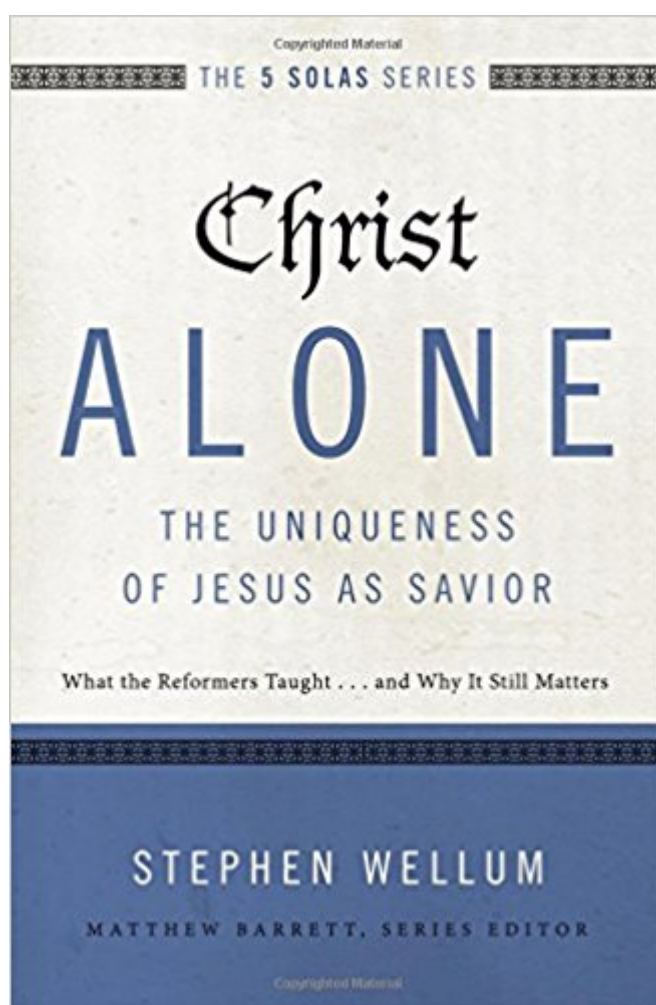


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# Christ Alone---The Uniqueness Of Jesus As Savior: What The Reformers Taught...and Why It Still Matters (The Five Solas Series)



## Synopsis

Historians and theologians alike have long recognized that at the heart of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation were five declarations (or *solae*) that distinguished the movement from other expressions of the Christian faith. Five hundred years later, we live in a different time with fresh challenges to our faith. Yet these rallying cries of the Reformation continue to speak to us, addressing a wide range of contemporary issues. The Five Solas series will help you understand the historical and biblical context of the five solas and how to live out the relevance of Reformation theology today. In *Christ Alone*, Stephen Wellum considers Christ's singular uniqueness and significance biblically, historically, and today, in our pluralistic and postmodern age. He examines the historical roots of the doctrine, especially in the Reformation era, and then shows how the uniqueness of Christ has come under specific attack today. Then, he walks us through the storyline of Scripture, from Christ's unique identity and work as prophet, priest, and king, to the application of his work to believers and our covenantal union with him to show that apart from Christ there is no salvation. Wellum shows that we must recover a robust biblical and theological doctrine of Christ's person and work in the face of today's challenges and explains why a fresh appraisal of the Reformation understanding of Christ alone is needed today.

## Book Information

Series: The Five Solas Series

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Zondervan (April 18, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0310515742

ISBN-13: 978-0310515746

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #265,601 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #111 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Protestantism > Calvinist #335 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > History > Historical Theology #5360 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology

## Customer Reviews

There have been many attempts over the centuries to expound on Peter's answer to Jesus's

question, "Who do you say that I am?" "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Stephen Wellum's book unpacks both parts of Peter's answer by giving a fuller biblical account of the uniqueness of his person (as Son) and the sufficiency of his work (as Christ). This biblical-theological material serves as the backdrop for appreciating the significance of the Reformation's recovery of "Christ alone." Wellum's retrieval of this central Reformation sola is a wonderful encouragement to the church today, in a new relativistic and pluralistic context, to go and do likewise "to testify with lips and lives that the meaning of creation and the message of salvation is found in Christ alone. -- Kevin J. Vanhoozer, Research Professor of Systematic Theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

Christ alone is the glue and centerpiece of the five great solas of the reformation according to this magnificent work by Steve Wellum. We see the centrality of Christ in both his person and his work, for the work of Christ is effective because of who he is. Wellum makes his case from both biblical and systematic theology, and he shows he is well-versed in philosophy as well. I believe this book is going to be read and quoted for many years to come. -- Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Christ Alone---The Uniqueness of Jesus as Savior, Stephen Wellum reminds us that "Christ alone" is not only the center of the five Reformation solas, but that it stands as the central doctrine of systematic theology. Without it we cannot fully understand the doctrines of the Trinity, humanity, or salvation. "Christ alone," argues Wellum, "must connect all the doctrines of our theology because Christ alone stands as the cornerstone of all the purposes and plans of God himself." Consequently, if we get "Christ alone" wrong, Wellum reminds us, "all other doctrines will likely suffer." So take up this book, read it, and think on the person and work of Christ in order that you may know, worship, and proclaim the same Christ as the Reformers, who is none other than the Christ of Scripture. -- Juan R. Sanchez, Senior Pastor of High Pointe Baptist Church, Austin, Texas

Stephen Wellum is Professor of Christian Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Kingdom through Covenant* (Crossway). He is also the author of a forthcoming volume on Christology in the *Foundations of Evangelical Theology* series (Crossway). He is also writing a systematic theology that will be published around 2017 (B&H Academic). Matthew Barrett is Tutor of Systematic Theology and Church History at Oak Hill Theological College in London. He is the executive editor of *Credo Magazine*, as well as the author and editor of several books, including *Salvation by Grace*, *Four Views on the Historical Adam*, and *Owen on the Christian Life*. <sup>^</sup>

Thorough almost to the point of overdoing it. Presents the the why and the necessity of the incarnation and the cross in a way that can leave no doubt as to the truth that Christ alone could bring redemption and salvation, and only through the cross.

This has been a good read so far as I am still working my way through. It is rich in content and easy to read which is good for both the beginner and advanced theologian. The doctrine of Christ Alone is so foundational for all theology and understanding.

We are quickly approaching the 500-year anniversary of the event that people often date the Reformation back to Martin Luther's nailing of his 95 theses to the doors of Wittenberg. As we approach this anniversary, there are certain to be many books and articles written on the importance of and reflections about the Reformation and its impact on our theology today. And rightfully so. One such book comes to us as the fourth in a series from Zondervan. The series is called "The 5 Solas Series: What the Reformers Taught and Why It Still Matters." I reviewed the three previous volumes in this series here, here, and here. Now, allow me to introduce to you the fourth in the series, written by SBTS professor of Christian Theology, Stephen Wellum's "Christ Alone: The Uniqueness of Jesus as Savior. In the introduction to this volume, Wellum helpfully puts all five of the solas of the Reformation into perspective: Reformation theology is often summarized by the five solas. Scripture alone (sola Scriptura) stands as the formal principle of the Reformation and the foundation of all theology. God's glory alone (soli Deo gloria) functions as a capstone for all Reformation theology, connecting its various parts to God's one purpose for creating this world and humanity in it. In between these two solas, the other three emphasize that God has chosen and acted to save us by his sovereign grace alone (sola gratia), through faith alone (sola fide), which is grounded in and through Christ alone (solus Christus) (19). In this present volume, Wellum zeroes in on solus Christus, the central wheel, as Wellum puts it, of the other four solas and the heart of Christian theology. In this volume, which is not a full-orbed Christology, Wellum focuses on two primary aspects of a biblical Christology: The exclusive identity of Christ and his sufficient work. Wellum states: "Simply put, Christ alone must connect all the doctrines of our theology because Christ alone stands as the cornerstone of all the purposes and plans of God himself. But if we misinterpret who Christ is and what he does in his life, death, and resurrection, then all other doctrines will likely suffer (24). The Structure The book is comprised of 3 parts, each containing 4 chapters. Part 1 looks at the storyline of Scripture in order to establish the exclusive identity of Christ. In these chapters, the author looks at the overall storyline

of Scripture first, followed by chapters on the self-witness of Christ and the confirmation of that witness by the apostles. The final chapter in this first part begins a transition from a focus on Christ's person to a focus on his work by looking at the incarnation. Part 2 turns to the topic of the sufficiency of Christ in order to determine the nature and necessity of his sacrifice. In this part are chapters on Christ as our perfect prophet-priest-king, the sufficiency of the atonement, and two chapters on penal substitution. The final part, Part 3, looks at why the Reformers taught Christ alone and how the last five hundred years have created a different cultural context for us today. In the words of Wellum: "From beginning to end, this book confesses with the Reformers that Jesus Christ bears the exclusive identity of God the Son incarnate and has accomplished an all-sufficient work to fulfill God's eternal plans and establish God's eternal kingdom on earth" (27). Conclusion In this book, Wellum offers the reader an excellent look at why the Reformers taught Christ Alone, and why we must do so today. Each chapter in this book is an incredible gold mine of biblical truth and careful theological study that lifts the readers hearts and minds to understand more of the uniqueness and sufficiency of Christ "an understanding that does not stop there, but leads us to worship, live out, and proclaim the excellencies of Christ alone. As with all of the volumes in this series, you will do yourself a great service to turn your hearts and minds to the solas of the Reformation, particular solus Christus. In accordance with FTC regulations, I would like to thank Zondervan publishers for providing me with a review copy of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review.

My endorsement: "Steve Wellum is my favorite living theologian because he masterfully integrates exegesis, biblical theology, historical theology, systematic theology, and practical theology culminating in doxology. He does it again in this book on sola Christus." Andy Naselli, assistant professor of New Testament and theology, Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis; elder, Bethlehem Baptist Church

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