

## The Heart of Lutheranism: Justification by Faith Alone

God has declared sinners righteous. That's the chief article of the Christian faith. What moved God to make that declaration was not sinners' obedience to his commands—because they could only merit a judgment of condemnation—but exclusively his astounding grace (Rom 3:24). For the sake of the perfect life and innocent death of his Son, offered on behalf of all, God has justified a world of sinners (Rom 4:25). Those who trust in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, by the work of the Holy Spirit, have through faith the righteousness that counts before God on the day of judgment. They need not live in fear that God will punish them for their sins here or hereafter (Rom 8:1), because Christ's righteousness has been credited to all who, despairing of their ability to produce a righteousness that would please God, cling to Jesus.

We are justified through faith alone, apart from any works we have done. That central teaching of Scripture stands at the heart of Lutheranism. As Lutherans, we believe, teach, and confess the astounding truth of the gospel restored to its proper place at the time of the Reformation: we receive the forgiveness of sin by God's grace, for Christ's sake, through trust in Christ's perfect work in our place. Because the God who never lies and is never mistaken has declared us righteous, we are free from the pressure of doing some great work to attract God's attention or show ourselves worthy of his love.

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# REFORMATION 500



Southeastern Wisconsin District Festival Service

**November 5 ♦ 3:30 PM**

**Miller High Life Theatre**

500 W Kilbourn Ave ♦ Milwaukee, WI

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