

The excerpt below is from Leif Grane, "Justification by Faith Alone? An Unguarded Essay," *By Faith Alone. Essays on Justification in Honor of Gerhard O. Forde* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 2004) 45.

*Justification by Faith? An Unguarded Essay*

thing to be said or heard because one was called to say it or accustomed to hear it. Not on the moon, but *hic et nunc* (here and now), and that does not mean as long as the service lasts, but every day and hour. If forgiveness of sin is life and blessedness, then it is the joyous message that makes life worth living, a word that changes our experience and makes us into different people. Not in such a way that we have anything to boast of, but so that the joy has consequences not in the ideas of some system, but in our daily situations, because Christ will live our life and let the glory of creation throw its light on sinners.

6. *Justification by faith as it has been understood in this essay is incompatible with any understanding of the church in which the church order is held to be essential in itself, apart from its only purpose: to let the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments happen.*

When justification by faith means life and blessedness, there is nothing to add. The church is the community of all those who share in the priesthood of all believers. The ministry has its special task, but it is not adding anything, just fulfilling what all believers are authorized to do. Ministers have no other authority than that which belongs to the church, because baptism, not ordination, gives it to them. By ordination he or she is merely selected to a special service, but that does not mean that although we all serve, "some serve more than others." There is no other priesthood than the priesthood of all believers. As far as the ecclesiastical office is concerned, it is not in any sense a *sacerdotium*, but only a *ministerium sacerdotii*, whether we talk about ordinary church ministers or bishops. Those who want to add any special dignity to the external church as something essential to being Christian ought to be ashamed of themselves. It is the gospel they are obscuring.