

Structure of More's *Dialogue Concerning Heresies* Section 4.11 on Luther's *Sola Fide*

Arguments Led by Interrogated Man, Objecting to the Interrogation Outline by Dr. Christopher Malloy

[Page numbers from *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, ed. Mary Gottschalk (NY: Scepter, 2006)]

- A. (p. 431f) *Sola fide* means something quite basic and tried: One should trust in God and do good.
 - B. (p. 432f) *Sola fide* applies only to those who die immediately after Baptism, for these have no time to do good works.
 - C. (p. 433f) Since the person precedes the work, justification precedes works, which necessarily follow but which do not make one more just.
 - D. (pp. 434–39): Faith cannot exist without good hope, charity, and good works.
 - 1. (pp. 434f) One may say “faith alone” since “faith always has good hope and charity with it and cannot but work well” (p. 434). (Arguments 5–7 maintain this theme and are thus indented.)
 - 2. (pp. 435f) [Messenger steps in]: In 1 Cor 13, Paul could be said to be using a literary device, not asserting the possibility of a faith without charity.
 - 3. (p. 438) “A dead faith is no faith, just as a dead man is no man”.
 - 4. (p. 438f) In James, “faith” is said of demons by equivocation, since “The real faith is indeed a faith in the promises of God,” a trust no demon can have.
 - E. (p. 441) When we say “faith alone” we *mean* “faith with charity” and works.
 - F. (pp. 441–45): God rewards solely faith
 - 1. (pp. 441f) Although true faith cannot be without works, yet, God rewards solely the faith.
 - 2. (p. 442f) The question is put to the interrogated: On what basis do you deny he rewards works? He answers: “Scripture”, adducing many texts.
 - 3. (p. 445) None of these texts deny that the reward is given solely for faith.
- Return to D. (pp. 446): Objection: Faith cannot be without good works.
- Return to C. (p. 446f) Objection: (Rhetorical question): Who would sin if he truly believed?
- G. (pp. 447–451): All our deeds are worthless (Although one might group this with ‘F’, yet the argument strikes radically new ground)
 - 1. (p. 447f) “God rewards solely faith” is proved by Isaiah – all our righteous deeds are sins.
 - 2. (pp. 449ff) Here, the interrogated attempts to appeal to something basic, always held by the Church. This is somewhat of a revisiting of the first argument (A): “All our sufficiency is from God” (p. 449).
 - H. (p. 451) The interrogated finally confesses the core principle: All is destiny.