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Understanding Calvinism: An Overview Study

by

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INTRODUCTION¹

Understanding the movement and the ideology labelled Calvinism is a rather challenging topic. But nonetheless it is an important topic to tackle. As important as any part of such an endeavour is deciding on a “plan of attack” in getting into the topic. The movement covered by this label “Calvinism” has spread out its tentacles all over the place and in many different, sometimes in conflicting directions.

The logical starting place is with the person whose name has been attached to the label, although I'm quite sure he would be most uncomfortable with most of the content bearing his name.² After exploring the history of John Calvin, we will take a look at a few of the more influential interpreters of Calvin over the subsequent centuries into the present day.

This will open the door to attempt to explain the ideology of Calvinism with some of the distinctive terms and concepts associated exclusively with it.

I. The Persons

From the digging into the history of Calvinism, I have discovered one clear fact: Calvinism is a religious movement that goes well beyond John Calvin, in some aspects so far beyond him that I strongly suspect he would denounce some of these ideas as heresy. But there is no getting away from the reality that Calvinism is linked to the man John Calvin, at least in its core tenants. Thus the natural starting point is to understand the man John Calvin and the influences that shaped his

¹One important note: this study is intentionally written with heavy use of secondary sources taken from the internet. Although I have some 300 plus primary and secondary sources in my personal digital library including copies in English, Latin, German, and French of most of the figures in the study, I intentionally chose to turn primarily to (free) internet based sources (even though most of these were verified against the sources in my personal library). The reason for this was to create for you the reader an enormous set of hyperlinks that could be referenced for follow up study. Very few will have access to the printed versions of the sources in my personal library. Consequently, literally several hundred hyperlinks are embedded throughout the study as a further reference of insights. The Wikipedia encyclopedia online has a massive and well referenced set of articles on just about every phase of Calvinism by several dozen -- mostly insider -- Reformed church authors.

²“Calvin's writing and preachings provided the seeds for the branch of theology that bears his name. The Reformed, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches, which look to Calvin as the chief expositor of their beliefs, have spread throughout the world.” [“John Calvin,” wikipedia.org]



thinking in the 1500s of Switzerland when he lived and worked.

A word about sources behind this study. Very deliberately, I have placed major attention on internet sources of information, more than on print publications. I recognize the limitations of internet based materials, but careful selection of peer based sources form the core of these references. Thus a large number of hyperlinks are contained in this study and can be clicked on while using the electronic version of the pdf file containing this study. In my personal digital library of almost ten thousand volumes mostly through the Logos Systems program, I have quite a number of volumes dealing with both John Calvin and Calvinism but beyond limited quotes contained in this study, these materials would not be available to you the reader. One of my objectives is to create options for more detailed study beyond the scope of this limited analysis.

A. John Calvin

Calvin lived from July 10, 1509 to May 27, 1564, when at 54 years he passed away. Below is a chronol-

ogy of significant dates and events in Calvin's life.³

- 1509 Calvin was born in Noyon, France on July 10.
- 1523 Fourteen year-old Calvin goes to Paris to study.
- 1528–29 Calvin goes to Orleans and then Bourges to study law.
- 1531 Calvin's Father dies.
- 1532 He publishes his first work—a commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia*.
- 1533 Calvin and Nicolas Cop flee Paris. At about this time Calvin undergoes a "sudden conversion."
- 1534 Calvin visits Lefevre D'Etaples and resigns his two benefices.
- 1536 In March, first edition of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is published.
- 1536 In August, Calvin is persuaded by Farel to remain in Geneva.
- 1538 Calvin and Farel are banished from Geneva. Calvin goes to Strasbourg as pastor to the French-speaking congregation.
- 1539 Cardinal Sadeleto writes letter to Geneva. Calvin is asked to respond on behalf of Geneva.
- 1540 Calvin's *Commentary on Romans* is published. In August, Calvin marries the widow of an Anabaptist, Idelette de Bure.
- 1541 Calvin is welcomed back to Geneva September 13.
- 1542 Calvin writes a treatise on free will against the Roman Catholic theologian Albert Pighius.
- 1549 Calvin's wife, Idelette, dies. *Consensus Tigurinus* is signed with Zurich.
- 1552 Jerome Bolsec banished from Geneva.
- 1553 Servetus is burned at the stake for heresy.
- 1559 Calvin is made a citizen of Geneva. Final edition of *Institutes* is published. Academy is established.
- 1564 Calvin dies on May 27

Formative Years in France: 1509 - 1533

He was born Jehan Cauvin and in French, his native tongue, Jean Calvin. Calvin was born at Noyon in the Picardy region of France as the first of four sons who survived infancy. His father was a successful cathedral notary and registrar to the ecclesiastical court. His mother was Jeanne le Franc from Cambrai France; she died a few years after Calvin's birth. Given the devout Roman Catholic faith of his parents, Calvin became heavily involved in church life during his later childhood and teen years. Through his father's connections Calvin was able to study Latin in Paris at the Collège de la Marche from one of the greatest Latin professors of that time, Mathurin Cordier. Subsequently he enrolled in the

Collège de Montaigu as a philosophy student. Either in 1525 or 1526 his father enrolled Calvin in the University of Orléans as a law student contending that Calvin could earn more as a lawyer than as a priest.

But Calvin's interest gravitated a different direction after entering the University of Bourges in 1529. He became fascinated by the very popular humanistic philosophy of the time, which in turn led him to focus on classical studies including ancient classical Greek during his 18 month stay at the university. By 1532, Calvin finished his law studies receiving his *licentiate* in law. After bouncing around for the next several months between home in Noyon and Orléans, he ended up in Paris by October 1533. He became entangled in a controversy at the Collège Royal over the call for reforms of education and of the Roman Catholic Church by the humanist⁴ oriented faculty members at the university. When the rector of the university, Nicolas Cop, used an inaugural address to call for radical reforms, he was forced to flee the city and go into hiding. Calvin, as a close friend, was implicated. He also had to flee Paris and ended up in Basel with his friend Cop in January 1536 where reforming tendencies found a more friendly reception.

Although very religious while growing up, in 1533 Calvin experienced what he would later term 'his conversion.' He provides one description of it in the Preface to his commentary on the Psalms:⁵

My condition, no doubt, is much inferior to his [King David's], and it is unnecessary for me to stay to show this. But as he was taken from the sheepfold, and elevated to the rank of supreme authority; so God having taken me from my originally obscure and humble condition, has reckoned me worthy of being invested with the honorable office of a preacher and minister of the gospel. When I was as yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who followed it to wealth this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy, and was put to the study of law. To this pursuit I endeavored faithfully to apply myself in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to

⁴One should not confuse the meaning of 'humanism' in the sixteenth century from the way it is defined in today's world. Originally 'humanism' was very religious oriented and sought to re-focus Christianity on ministering to the needs of people, rather than being so egocentric with concerns for itself. Not until more recent times has 'humanism' become linked to agnosticism and atheism.

⁵John Calvin, "The Author's Preface," *ccel.org*, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom08.vi.html>

³*Christian History Magazine* - Issue 12: *John Calvin: Reformer, Pastor, Theologian* (Worcester, PA: Christian History Institute, 1986).

the superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardor. I was quite surprised to find that before a year had elapsed, all who had any desire after purer doctrine were continually coming to me to learn, although I myself was as yet but a mere novice and tyro.

To be clear, in another account Calvin describes his conversion as a lengthy process taking place over time:⁶

Being exceedingly alarmed at the misery into which I had fallen, and much more at that which threatened me in view of eternal death, I, duty bound, made it my first business to betake myself to your way, condemning my past life, not without groans and tears. And now, O Lord, what remains to a wretch like me, but instead of defence, earnestly to supplicate you not to judge that fearful abandonment of your Word according to its deserts, from which in your wondrous goodness you have at last delivered me.

Although some difference of understanding among scholars on Calvin exists today about these two accounts, it is clear that during 1533 Calvin made a decisive break with the Roman Catholic Church and from that time on he became a staunch critic of it.⁷ This period of time also found Calvin uprooted from France and living in Switzerland as a refugee fleeing religious persecution. His 'foreigner' status in Switzerland would hamper his work periodically the remainder of his life.

Ministry Years in Switzerland: 1533 - 1564

Thus upon arriving in Basel in January 1536, Calvin was to begin a journey that he could never have imagined earlier. In Basel, the teachings of the reformer Johannes Oecolampadius became a major influence

⁶Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2009), 34.

⁷According to Cottret 2000, pp. 68–70, Ganoczy in his book *Le Jeune Calvin. Genèse et évolution de sa vocation réformatrice*, Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1966, p. 302, argues that Calvin's conversion took place over several years and that it was not a biographical or chronological event. Cottret quotes Olivier Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique de la Parole. Essai de rhétorique réformée*, Paris: H. Champion 1992, p. 522, noting a typological rather than a biographical perspective of the account of his conversion. The biographical argument is promoted by D. Fischer, "Conversion de Calvin", *Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses* 58 (1983), pp. 203–220. According to Parker 1975, pp. 192–196, Parker is in sympathy with Ganoczy's view, but in his investigations, he concluded that a certain period for his conversion could be determined." ["John Calvin," wikipedia.org, cf. footnote 9]

IOANNIS CALVINI INSTITUTIO CHRISTIANAE RELIGIONIS

CUM BREVI ANNOTATIONE ATQUE INDICIBUS LOCUPLETISSIMIS AD EDITIONEM
AMSTELODAMENSIS ACURATISSIME REASCRIBI CURAVIT

A. THOLUCK.

P A R S P R I O R .



BEROLINI,

APUD GUSTAVUM EICHLER.

MDCCCLXXXIV.

VENDUNT LONDINI BLACK, YOUNG ET YOUNG. EDINBURGI A. BLACK.
PARISIIS ET GENEVAE RIDER, CHAMULIER.

upon his thinking. This bishop in the church at Basel was heavily influenced by Luther's teachings and introduced many of them in Basel through his ministry at St. Martin's Church beginning in 1522 as well as giving lectures at the university in Basel.

The first edition of the *Institutio Christianae Religionis* or *Institutes of the Christian Religion* was published in Latin by Calvin in 1536 while at Basel, and was addressed to King Francis I of France on behalf of the French Protestants, the Huguenots, who were under persecution by the French king. This publication would be regularly revised and expanded by Calvin for the remainder of his life with the final edition coming in 1559.⁸ Thus the various editions reflect his changing

⁸"The original Latin edition appeared in 1536 with a preface addressed to King Francis I of France, written on behalf of the French Protestants (Huguenots) who were being persecuted. Most often, references to the Institutes are to Calvin's final Latin edition of 1559, which was expanded and revised from earlier edi-

viewpoints as well as the maturing of his understanding of scripture. The several English translations in circulation are based on different Latin and French editions, and thus will not have the same content.⁹ The English language reader should be aware of this when using a translation of the Institutes for study. The perspective of Calvin found in the translation will be heavily dependent on the translation source from the Latin and French editions and which edition of the translation is based on.

Although the contents continuously underwent change and expansion, the overarching objective from the first edition on remained the same: to give a summary overview of the reforms of the church that Calvin felt necessary. His intention was not to start a new church, but to reform the existing Catholic Church. Under this objective he proposed to cover the Creator and His creatures in the publication. Especially by the final edition of 1559, he switched over to an explanation of God and man that produced a complete recasting of the older editions into four sections and 80 chapters.¹⁰ The

tions. Calvin wrote five major Latin editions in his lifetime (1536, 1539, 1543, 1550, and 1559). He translated the first French edition of the Institutes in 1541, corresponding to his 1539 Latin edition, and supervised the translation of three later French translations. The French translations of Calvin's Institutes helped to shape the French language for generations, not unlike the influence of the King James Version for the English language. The final edition of the Institutes is approximately five times the length of the first edition." ["Institutes of the Christian Religion," wikipedia.org]

⁹"In English, five complete translations have been published - four from the Latin and one from the French. The first was made in Calvin's lifetime (1561) by Thomas Norton, the son-in-law of the English Reformer Thomas Cranmer. In the nineteenth century there were two translations, one by John Allen (1813) and one by Henry Beveridge (1845). The most recent from Latin is the 1960 edition, translated by Ford Lewis Battles and edited by John T. McNeill, currently considered the most authoritative edition by scholars. Calvin's first French edition (1541) has been translated by Elsie Anne McKee (2009). Due to the length of the Institutes, several abridged versions have been made. The most recent is by Tony Lane and Hilary Osborne; the text is their own alteration and abridgment of the Beveridge translation.

"A history of the Latin, French, Greek, Canadian, British, German, African, and English versions of Calvin's Institutes was done by B. B. Warfield, "On the Literary History of Calvin's Institutes," published in the seventh American edition of the John Allen translation (Philadelphia, 1936)." ["Institutes of the Christian Religion," wikipedia.org]

¹⁰"To pursue an explanation of the relationship between God and man, the edition of 1559, although Calvin claimed it to be 'almost a new work,' in fact completely recast the old Institutes into four sections and 80 chapters, on the basis of the Apostles' Creed,^[3] a traditional structure of Christian instruction used in Western Christianity. First, the knowledge of God is considered as knowledge of the Father, the creator, provider, and sustainer. Next, it is examined how the Son reveals the Father, since only God is able to reveal God. The third section of the Institutes describes the work of the Holy Spirit, who raised Christ from the dead, and who comes from the Father and the Son to affect a union in the Church through faith in Jesus Christ, with God, forever. And finally, the fourth section speaks of the Christian church, and how it is to live out the truths

structure of the Apostles' Creed served as a shaping design for this last edition.

Calvin's other writings reflect his growing skills with understanding both the Bible and the Christian religion. Beginning with a commentary of Seneca the Younger's *De Clementia*, in 1532 which revealed Calvin as a humanist in the tradition of Erasmus and a classical scholar, through the commentaries on various books of the Bible beginning in 1540 (on Romans), which demonstrated his humanist classical training in scripture interpretation, Calvin established himself as one of the primary writing reformers of the sixteenth century. He eventually composed commentaries on all of the New Testament documents with the exception of 2 and 3 John, along with Revelation. Plus a few commentaries exist on selected OT books: Isaiah, the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and Joshua. Up until 1557 the commentaries came out of his re-working of lectures delivered to students. But from 1557 on the lectures were published directly from stenographers' notes and these included the minor prophets, Daniel, Jeremiah, Lamentations, and a part of Ezekiel.¹¹

In addition, he composed numerous letters¹² and treatises addressing particular issues emerging in his day.¹³ Further, in the later years especially he com-
of God and Scriptures, particularly through the sacraments. This section also describes the functions and ministries of the church, how civil government relates to religious matters, and includes a lengthy discussion of the deficiencies of the papacy." ["Institutes of the Christian Religion," wikipedia.org]

¹¹Interestingly in regard to prophecy teachings in the OT, Calvin maintained that the book of Daniel only dealt with happenings between Daniel and the birth of Jesus, not with a future human history.

¹²He composed some 1,300 letters and some 3,000 written to him have survived as a part of his legacy.

¹³"Calvin's body of letters has not received the wide readership of the Institutes and bible commentaries since his correspondence obviously addressed the particular needs and occasions of his day. Even so, the scale of his letter writing was just as prodigious as his better-known works: his letters number some 1,300, and, along with some 3,000 letters written to him, fill eleven of Calvin's fifty-nine volumes in the Corpus Reformatorum.^[9] B. B. Warfield calls Calvin 'the great letter-writer of the Reformation age.'^[10]

"His letters, often written under the pseudonym Charles d'Esperville,^[11] concern issues ranging from disputes about local theater^[12] to raising support for fledgling churches^[13] to choosing sides in a political alliance.^[14] They also reveal personal qualities that are not evident in his exegetical prose. One example came after the massacre of the Waldensians of Provence in 1545 where 3,600 were slaughtered. Calvin was so dismayed that in a space of twenty-one days he visited Berne, Aurich, Schaffhausen, Basle, and Strasbourg, before addressing the deputies of the Cantons at the Diet of Arau, pleading everywhere for an intercession on behalf of those who survived.^[14] He wrote of his grief to William Farel:

Such was the savage cruelty of the persecutors, that neither young girls, nor pregnant women, nor infants were spared. So great is the atrocious cruelty of this proceeding, that I grow bewildered when I reflect upon it. How, then, shall I express it in words? ... I write, worn

posed many of the foundational documents for reformed churches, “including documents on the catechism, the liturgy, and church governance. He also produced several confessions of faith in order to unite the churches. In 1559, he drafted the French confession of faith, the *Gallic Confession*, and the synod in Paris accepted it with few changes. The *Belgic Confession* of 1561, a Dutch confession of faith, was partly based on the Gallic Confession.”¹⁴

The ministry of Calvin from 1536 to his death in 1564 centered in some major cities of Switzerland primarily: Basel, Geneva, Bern, Zurich, and Strasbourg, France. Most of his time was spent in **Geneva**, however.¹⁵ In these cities he developed friendships with numerous religious and political leaders who helped shape his thinking greatly. In **Basel**, at the outset was the humanist reformer Johannes Oecolampadius. After Basel, he spent a brief period of time in Ferrara, Italy serving as a secretary for the Princess Renée of France. But by June of 1536 he left for Paris to spend time with his brother Antoine while resolving their deceased father’s affairs. With the very hostile atmosphere against critics of the Roman Catholic Church in the city, he left for Strasbourg in August, since it has status as a free imperial city of the Holy Roman Empire and thus was more tolerate of the reformers. Military actions taking place forced Calvin to detour south and come through Geneva where he intended to spend on one night.

In **Geneva**, Calvin came under the influence of William Farel, a fellow French reformer living in the city. Farel prevailed on Calvin to remain in the city to assist him with reforming the church of Geneva. Sometime during 1537, Calvin received the title “pastor” although this lawyer-theologian had no pastoral training. Thus he began performing baptisms, weddings, funerals, as well as leading church services. During the fall of 1536 Farel and Calvin produced articles of re-organization that completed the transition of the churches of Geneva from Catholic to reformed congregations. On January 16, 1537 they presented their *Articles concernant l’or-*

ganisation de l’église et du culte à Genève (Articles on the Organization of the Church and its Worship at Geneva) to the city council for adoption and implementation by the town council. The proposal was hotly debated all through that year, and eventually as squabbles over the requirement of unleavened bread in communion exploded, the Geneva city council in September 1538 demanded both Calvin and Farel leave the city.

Calvin went at the invitation of Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito, to **Strasbourg** after both men had to take refuge in Basel from the decree of the council in Geneva, but Farel went to lead the church in Neuchâtel.

During his time in Strasbourg (1538-1541), Calvin served several churches in the city -- the Saint-Nicolas Church, the Sainte-Madeleine Church and the former Dominican Church, renamed the Temple Neuf -- preaching to some 400 to 500 people with two sermons on Sundays and almost daily lectures on various topics through the week. Also a second, greatly revised edition of the Institutes was produced and published in 1539.¹⁶ In 1540, the first edition of his commentary on Romans appeared in Latin and provided a template for all of his subsequent commentaries.¹⁷ In the preface, he acknowledged his indebtedness to influences from his predecessors Philipp Melanchthon, Heinrich Bullinger, and Martin Bucer.

During this time several friends urged Calvin to get married. “Several candidates were presented to him including one young woman from a noble family. Reluctantly, Calvin agreed to the marriage, on the condition that she would learn French. Although a wedding date was planned for March 1540, he remained reluctant and the wedding never took place.”¹⁸ But in August



1540, he married the widow Idelette de Bure, a Dutch lady who had two children from her first marriage. She and Calvin had a good marriage, although none of their children survived birth. After her death in 1549, he wrote these words to Pierre Viret, a dear friend:

¹⁶“For the second edition, published in 1539, Calvin dropped this format in favour of systematically presenting the main doctrines from scripture. In the process, the book was enlarged from six chapters to seventeen.” [“John Calvin: Minister in Strasbourg (1538-1541),” wikipedia.org]

¹⁷“The book was a model for his later commentaries: it included his own Latin translation from the Greek rather than the Latin Vulgate, an exegesis, and an exposition.” [“John Calvin: Minister in Strasbourg (1538-1541),” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸“John Calvin: Minister in Strasbourg (1538-1541),” wikipedia.org

out with sadness, and not without tears, which so burst forth, that every now and then they interrupt my words.^[14]

“One of Calvin’s better known letters was his reply to Jacopo Sadoleto’s “Letter to the Genevans,”^[15] and this “Reformation Debate” remains in print today.” [“John Calvin: bibliography: Letters,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁴“John Calvin: Selected works,” wikipedia.org. For a detailed listing and assessment of his writings, see “John Calvin: Bibliography,” wikipedia.org

¹⁵The wikipedia article on Calvin divides out this era of Calvin’s life into the following periods:

- Reform work commences (1536-1538)
- Minister in Strasbourg (1538-1541)
- Reform in Geneva (1541-1549:
- Discipline and opposition (1546-1553)
- Michael Servetus (1553)
- Securing the Reformation (1553-1556)
- Final Years (1555-1564)

I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life, of one who, had it been so ordered, would not only have been the willing sharer of my indigence, but even of my death. During her life she was the faithful helper of my ministry.¹⁹

Toward the end of 1540, the city council of **Geneva** reconsidered their ban of Calvin and decided they needed him back to serve in the city. Through a series of unusual events, Calvin came back to Geneva in September 1541 to stay.²⁰ Initially, he was on a six month loan from the city of Strasbourg to Geneva but in time it would become his permanent home in ministry. One of the enticements was a willingness now of the council to pass and impose Calvin's *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on the churches of the city, which they did on November 26, 1541.²¹

Publishing and re-organizing of the churches in the city consumed most of his time, along with preaching on Sundays.²²

¹⁹“Idelette Calvin: Calvin on Idelette,” wikipedia.org.

²⁰For details see “John Calvin: Reform in Geneva (1541-1549),” wikipedia.org.

²¹“In supporting Calvin’s proposals for reforms, the council of Geneva passed the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on 20 November 1541. The ordinances defined four orders of ministerial function: pastors to preach and to administer the sacraments; doctors to instruct believers in the faith; elders to provide discipline; and deacons to care for the poor and needy.^[33] They also called for the creation of the *Consistoire* (Consistory), an ecclesiastical court composed of the lay elders and the ministers. The city government retained the power to summon persons before the court, and the Consistory could judge only ecclesiastical matters having no civil jurisdiction. Originally, the court had the power to mete out sentences, with excommunication as its most severe penalty. However, the government contested this power and on 19 March 1543 the council decided that all sentencing would be carried out by the government.^[34]” [“John Calvin: Reform in Geneva (1541-1549),” wikipedia.org.]

²²“In 1542, Calvin adapted a service book used in Strasbourg, publishing *La Forme des Prières et Chants Ecclésiastiques* (The Form of Prayers and Church Hymns). Calvin recognised the power of music and he intended that it be used to support scripture readings. The original Strasbourg psalter contained twelve psalms by Clément Marot and Calvin added several more hymns of his own composition in the Geneva version. At the end of 1542, Marot became a refugee in Geneva and contributed nineteen more psalms. Louis Bourgeois, also a refugee, lived and taught music in Geneva for sixteen years and Calvin took the opportunity to add his hymns, the most famous being the Old Hundredth.^[35]

“In the same year of 1542, Calvin published *Catéchisme de l’Eglise de Genève* (Catechism of the Church of Geneva), which was inspired by Bucer’s *Kurze Schriftliche Erklärung* of 1534. Calvin had written an earlier catechism during his first stay in Geneva which was largely based on Martin Luther’s *Large Catechism*. The first version was arranged pedagogically, describing Law, Faith, and Prayer. The 1542 version was rearranged for theological reasons, covering Faith first, then Law and Prayer.^[36]

“During his ministry in Geneva, Calvin preached over two thousand sermons. Initially he preached twice on Sunday and three times during the week. This proved to be too heavy a burden and late in 1542 the council allowed him to preach only once on Sunday. However, in October 1549, he was again required to preach twice

But by 1546, bitter opposition to Calvin flourished in the city, in the merging of several groups into the libertines (their self-name was either Spirituels or Patriots). The group centered in a number of very wealthy families, politically powerful individuals, and interrelated families. They deeply resented the draconian rigid laws imposed by Calvin through the city council. As a Frenchman living in Switzerland, all kinds of charges were levelled against him as a foreigner. By 1547, opposition to both Calvin and other French ministers serving in the city enabled the libertines to gain control of the civil magistrates, the syndics, of Geneva. After a threatening letter was planted at the St. Pierre Cathedral where Calvin preached, a Jacques Gruet was eventually arrested and with Calvin’s consent was executed by the city council. Matters continued to deteriorate until they reached a low point in July of 1553 when the city council refused an offer to resign by Calvin but not because they wanted him to stay in the city.

The turning point came with the arrival of Michael Servetus in Geneva in August 1553. He was a fugitive from ecclesiastical authorities all over Europe, as well as a Spanish physician and Protestant theologian who questioned the trinity and paedobaptism. He was despised by both Protestant and Catholic authorities alike, because of his radical beliefs that **Michael Servetus exchanged many let-**



ters with Calvin until Calvin decided he
was a heretic & then had him executed.
tenants of the Apos-
tles’ Creed. Calvin had known Servetus since 1546 when they -- through the mutual friend of Jean Frellon of Lyon -- began an exchange of letters debating various points of doctrine. Servetus led a clandestine life mostly on the run from authorities, and hiding in different cities across Europe using assumed names, such as Sundays and, in addition, every weekday of alternate weeks. His sermons lasted more than an hour and he did not use notes. An occasional secretary tried to record his sermons, but very little of his preaching was preserved before 1549. In that year, professional scribe Denis Raguénier, who had learned or developed a system of shorthand, was assigned to record all of Calvin’s sermons. An analysis of his sermons by T.H.L. Parker suggests that Calvin was a consistent preacher and his style changed very little over the years.^{[37][38]} [“John Calvin: Reform in Geneva (1541-1549),” wikipedia.org.]

as Villeneuve. He used his medical skills to make a living, while spewing out his criticisms of both the Roman Catholic Church and the churches of the reformers.

After escaping custody in Lyon he made a stop in Geneva on his way to Italy. The authorities in Lyon had sentenced him to death in absentia by slow burning. In Geneva he was recognized and arrested there. Calvin's secretary, Nicholas de la Fontaine, prepared a list of charges to present to the prosecutor, Philibert Bethelier, for trying Servetus in the courts. Unfortunately, Berthelier was a member of a libertine family along with the judges being sympathetic to this philosophy. The decision was made to drag out the trial mostly as an embarrassment of Calvin. In order to diminish blame upon themselves, the city council wrote inquiries to Zurich, Basel, Bern, and Schaffhausen seeking their advice on what to do with Servetus. Answers came back demanding Servetus' execution. So on October 27, 1533, Servetus was burned alive atop a pyre of his own books in Geneva at the Plateau of Champel on the edge of the city.

Calvin came out of this affair trumpeted as a heroic defender of Christianity and in a stronger position than ever before in the city. A two year battle with the city council followed over ecclesiastical authority. Calvin had demanded that the Consistory (church courts) retain the power of excommunication but the city council of Geneva had assumed this power for themselves. Through a series of political maneuvers by both Calvin and the city council, the issue dragged on going back and forth until at the insistence of the area Swiss churches, the power of excommunication were granted to the Consistory on January 22, 1555. With elections in February, the influence of the libertines began a rapid decline so that by May 1555, most of the leaders had been either forced to flee the city, or else had been executed by those sympathetic to Calvin.

From this time until his death in 1564, Calvin had an iron grip control on the city of Geneva and his rulings were largely uncontested. He enjoyed popularity across Europe on a par with that of Luther. Although somewhat friendly to one another early on, a controversy between Calvin and Zwingli over the Lord's Supper forced Luther to side with Zwingli against Calvin. Calvin attempted in different ways to bring closer unity among the differing Protestant churches but with only minimal success.



Calvin preached at St. Pierre Cathedral, the main church in Geneva.

One of the most lasting contributions was the formation of a training school in Geneva. Formed initially in two sections, a grammar school called the *collège* or *schola privata*, and a secondary school called the *académie* or *schola publica*, in June 1559. Within five years the two segments as one school had over 1,200 students. Eventually the primary school became the *Collège Calvin*, one of the college preparatory schools of Geneva, while the *académie* became the University of Geneva.

Another significant influence came in 1555 when Calvin led the city to shelter the Marian exiles (those who fled the reign of Catholic Mary Tudor in England) in Geneva starting in 1555. Under the city's protection, they were able to form their own reformed church under John Knox and William Whittingham and eventually carried Calvin's ideas on doctrine and polity back to England and Scotland.

In the fall of 1558, Calvin became ill and he became fearful of dying. He was working on the final revision of the Institutes and thus forced himself to work extra hard and thereby hastened his death. This edition was greatly expanded and restructured to some five times the length of the first edition. Even though he recovered from this initial fever, he burst a blood vessel because of a violent fit of coughing while preaching, and his health began a steady decline subsequently.

He preached his final sermon on February 6, 1564; made his will out on April 25 and said his goodbyes to the ministers of the city a few days later -- which are recorded in the *Discours d'adieu aux ministres* --; and then passed away on May 27, 1564 at 54 years of age. Because so many people wanted to view his body, the city had him buried in an unmarked grave in the *Cimetière des Rois*, in order to avoid him being turned into some kind of cult hero. While the exact location remains uncertain, a marker stone was added to a grave in the 1800s marking the traditional site of his grave. Thus the life of this remarkable man came to an end, but his legacy continues on even into our time.

CALVIN'S LEGACY²³

²³**leg-a-cy** [leg-uh-see] Show IPA noun, plural leg-a-cies.

1. Law. a gift of property, especially personal property, as money, by will; a bequest.

2. **anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor: the legacy of ancient Rome.**

3. an applicant to or student at a school that was attended by his or her parent.

4. Obsolete . the office, function, or commission of a legate. adjective

5. of or pertaining to old or outdated computer hardware, software, or data that, while still functional, does not work well with up-to-date systems.

Of these definitions of the English word 'legacy' from *Dictio-*
Page 7

Concretely Calvin in his will left small sums of money to both his family -- his step-children -- and to the college which he founded in Geneva. His larger legacy was his influence upon the lives of countless thousands of individuals in shaping their understanding of the nature of the Christian life. Coming out of his teachings was the movement known as Calvinism, although scholars hotly debate just how much actual connection to Calvinism Calvin himself has. In some ways a possibly larger influence came upon Protestantism generally, and especially within the spheres of the Reformed Church in Europe and the Presbyterian Church in the English speaking world.

The source of his thinking and beliefs are derived from his commentaries on the Bible along with his sermons and treatises.²⁴ But the most systematic articulation of his beliefs are found in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.²⁵ As noted above, the various editions written over an almost three decade period from 1533 to 1559 reflect changing and expanding viewpoints of belief by Calvin, rather than a one dimensional perspective. One would have to say, however, that the core beliefs remained pretty much the same over time, as reflected in this publication in its different editions.²⁶

For the most part, Calvin's belief are consistent with the foundational affirmation of the Apostles' Creed, which stands as a basic standard for measuring orthodox Christianity both within and beyond Roman Catholicism, as well as Protestantism.²⁷

nary.com, number two is the one that applies here.

²⁴For a very helpful listing of the numerous publications of Calvin, see "John Calvin bibliography," at wikipedia.org.

²⁵A reasonably helpful summation of his beliefs is found at the "Theology of John Calvin," wikipedia.org. Particularly helpful are the numerous links to additional articles touching upon specific topics in his belief system. This enables substantial additional study on the subject.

²⁶"The first edition [of the *Institutes*] from 1536 consisted of only six chapters. The second edition, published in 1539, was three times as long because he added chapters on subjects that appear in Melancthon's *Loci Communes*. In 1543, he again added new material and expanded a chapter on the Apostles' Creed. The final edition of the *Institutes* appeared in 1559. By then, the work consisted of four books of eighty chapters, and each book was named after statements from the creed: Book 1 on God the Creator, Book 2 on the Redeemer in Christ, Book 3 on receiving the Grace of Christ through the Holy Spirit, and Book 4 on the Society of Christ or the Church.^[76]" ["John Calvin: Theology," wikipedia.org]

²⁷Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem caeli et terrae, et in Iesum Christum, Filium Eius unicum, Dominum nostrum, qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine, passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus, descendit ad inferos, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit ad caelos, sedet ad dexteram Patris omnipotentis, inde venturus est iudicare vivos et mortuos. Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam catholicam, sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, vitam aeternam. Amen.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered

What defines Calvin as distinct are those places where he deviates both from the Apostles' Creed and / or either Roman Catholic or Protestant belief historically. He may either extend or adopt alternative perspectives. An examination of the four books of the final edition in 1559 of his *Institutes* provides a glimpse into his beliefs at the end of his life, and through the dominating influence of this edition of the *Institutes*, the belief system most often used by his followers.²⁸ In the eighty

under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

²⁸"The first statement in the *Institutes* acknowledges its central theme. It states that the sum of human wisdom consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.^[77] Calvin argues that the knowledge of God is not inherent in humanity nor can it be discovered by observing this world. The only way to obtain it is to study scripture. Calvin writes, 'For anyone to arrive at God the Creator he needs Scripture as his Guide and Teacher.'^[78] He does not try to prove the authority of scripture but rather describes it as autopiston or self-authenticating. He defends the trinitarian view of God and, in a strong polemical stand against the Catholic Church, argues that images of God lead to idolatry.^[79] At the end of the first book, he offers his views on providence, writing, 'By his Power God cherishes and guards the World which he made and by his Providence rules its individual Parts.'^[80] Humans are unable to fully comprehend why God performs any particular action, but whatever good or evil people may practise, their efforts always result in the execution of God's will and judgments.^[81]

"The second book includes several essays on the original sin and the fall of man, which directly refer to Augustine, who developed these doctrines. He often cited the Church Fathers in order to defend the reformed cause against the charge that the reformers were creating new theology.^[82] In Calvin's view, sin began with the fall of Adam and propagated to all of humanity. The domination of sin is complete to the point that people are driven to evil.^[83] Thus fallen humanity is in need of the redemption that can be found in Christ. But before Calvin expounded on this doctrine, he described the special situation of the Jews who lived during the time of the Old Testament. God made a covenant with Abraham, promising the coming of Christ. Hence, the Old Covenant was not in opposition to Christ, but was rather a continuation of God's promise. Calvin then describes the New Covenant using the passage from the Apostles' Creed that describes Christ's suffering under Pontius Pilate and his return to judge the living and the dead. For Calvin, the whole course of Christ's obedience to the Father removed the discord between humanity and God.^[84]

"In the third book, Calvin describes how the spiritual union of Christ and humanity is achieved. He first defines faith as the firm and certain knowledge of God in Christ. The immediate effects of faith are repentance and the remission of sin. This is followed by spiritual regeneration, which returns the believer to the state of holiness before Adam's transgression. However, complete perfection is unattainable in this life, and the believer should expect a continual struggle against sin.^[85] Several chapters are then devoted to the subject of justification by faith alone. He defined justification as 'the acceptance by which God regards us as righteous whom he has received into grace.'^[86] In this definition, it is clear that it is God who initiates and carries through the action and that peo-

chapters -- divided into four 'books' -- we find the most developed expression of his beliefs. Book one centers on God as Creator; book two on Christ as Redeemer; Book three on receiving the grace of Christ through the Holy Spirit; and book four on the church as the society of Christ. In order to grasp the details fully, one needs to read this document itself, as is possible from internet based translations of this 1559 edition at the CCEL.ORG web site., or the Calvin500.com web site.

Some of the more significant deviations of Calvin's belief system come to the surface both in the *Institutes* as well as in the commentaries, letters, and tractates.²⁹

In his **conceptualization of God**, Calvin will affirm the traditional statement of the Apostles' Creed including that of the trinity. Although not the only sixteenth century reformer to discuss the sovereignty of God, Calvin is the one most remembered for an emphasis on this topic. But his emphasis was not that of his interpreters a couple of centuries later who were heav-

ple play no role; God is completely sovereign in salvation.^[87] Near the end of the book, Calvin describes and defends the doctrine of predestination, a doctrine advanced by Augustine in opposition to the teachings of Pelagius. Fellow theologians who followed the Augustinian tradition on this point included Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther,^[88] though Calvin's formulation of the doctrine went further than the tradition that went before him.^[89] The principle, in Calvin's words, is that 'All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.'^[90]

"The final book describes what he considers to be the true Church and its ministry, authority, and sacraments. He denied the papal claim to primacy and the accusation that the reformers were schismatic. For Calvin, the Church was defined as the body of believers who placed Christ at its head. By definition, there was only one 'catholic' or 'universal' Church. Hence, he argued that the reformers 'had to leave them in order that we might come to Christ.'^[91] The ministers of the Church are described from a passage from Ephesians, and they consisted of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and doctors. Calvin regarded the first three offices as temporary, limited in their existence to the time of the New Testament. The latter two offices were established in the church in Geneva. Although Calvin respected the work of the ecumenical councils, he considered them to be subject to God's Word found in scripture. He also believed that the civil and church authorities were separate and should not interfere with each other.^[92]" ["John Calvin: Theology," wikipedia.org]

²⁹For those with special interest in the thinking of this sixteenth century Reformer, all of his known writings are now available in digital format through the Logos Systems software.

Their *CALVIN 500 COLLECTION* containing 108 volumes was released in 2009 in celebration of the 500th anniversary of his birth. Their advertised price for the collection is \$1,000.00 but it can be bought in certain situations for about 40% of that price. It includes the following: The *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, by John Calvin: English, Latin, and French (9 vols.); Calvin's Commentaries (46 vols.); The Letters of John Calvin (4 vols.); Tracts and Treatises of John Calvin (8 vols.); John Calvin Biography Collection (10 vols.); Calvin and the History of Calvinism Collection (31 vols.).

Logos Systems also offers numerous other secondary works written about Calvin by others from the sixteenth century down to the present.

ily infected with the rigid rationalism coming out of the Enlightenment. In their highly mechanized view of the universe, the rationalistic conclusions reached excluded human freedom to a totally mechanistic control by a sovereign God. Thus the foundations for Calvinism were set more in this thinking, than in that of Calvin himself who affirmed both human freedom of choice and divine sovereignty without any attempt to explain the connection between the two.

He deeply felt that knowledge of God came exclusively through divine revelation in scripture at God's initiative rather than through human desire. Calvin thus felt no need to 'prove' the authority of scripture, because this was self-evident. Man's task was not to affirm, but to understand scripture and to obey it.

God stands in control over His creation and holds humanity accountable for its actions. Humanity from Adam onward stands under the complete domination of sin, as Calvin describes the situation within the framework of the church father Augustine. Arguing theology this way from the church fathers was an effort to counter charges from his Roman Catholic critics that the reformers were creating a new theology that was heretical in nature. Through the redemption provided in Christ, God provides a new path of deliverance for this condemnation brought about by human depravity. Calvin stood with Luther on the justification of the sinner by faith alone. But differs with Luther on the role of human response to the redemptive work of Christ. God stands completely sovereign in the providing of salvation controlling those who respond in faith and those who do not. Here Calvin goes well beyond Luther, Aquinas and others in advocating a "double predestination" view that the sovereign God intentionally wills some to eternal damnation and others to eternal life.³⁰

In the last book of the *Institutes*, Calvin injected into Protestantism the highly questionable idea of a church universal that transcends any Christian group or local congregation.³¹ Clearly this was driven by his anti-catholic stance as a way to reject the claims of the Vatican of possessing exclusive authority as the Body of Christ on the earth. Thus "church" is redefined as a body of believers devoted to Christ as its head, in opposition to the pope. In this he advocated the 'true

³⁰"All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death." [Calvin, *Institutes*, 1989, Book III, Chapter 21, Par 5].

Interestingly in paragraph 7 while commenting on Rom. 9:8 and Gal. 3:16, Calvin backtracks somewhat from a rigid statement of this double predestination. To be sure, his comments are very rambling and often make virtually no sense whatsoever.

³¹For details see *Institutes*, book four, "The Holy Catholic Church," CCEL.org, with its twenty chapters.

church' in distinction to the Roman Catholic Church as the 'false church.' Central to this 'true church' is the use of the proper sacraments of baptism and communion, defined rather distinctly from that of Luther, and even from that held by Zwingli.³² A major section in book four, chapter twelve, is devoted to the right of the church to impose excommunication upon members as opposed to the civil authorities in a town council. This came out of the early struggles with the Geneva city council that controlled excommunication of church members until Calvin's supporters finally wrestled control of the council away from his opponents in the city.

As the above survey of his biography suggests, Calvin made numerous enemies during his ministry in Switzerland. Most vicious was the Vatican and the efforts of Roman Catholic bishops to discredit him and destroy his influence in Switzerland. But his style and personality evoked many enemies inside the reform movement in central Europe as well.³³

Calvin's anti-Semitism centered on Jews living in his day and was about as intense as the views of Luther. Calvin distinguished between Jews in the Bible and Jews in his day which he considered largely ignorant and inept.³⁴

³²For his views of communion see chapter 14 of book four of the Institutes. For his advocacy of infant baptism see chapter 15. Baptism primarily is entrance into the fellowship of the universal church, and covers all sinful conduct both before and after being administered. The antecedent of Israelite circumcision as prerequisite to entrance into the "Old Covenant" plays a significant role for "baptism" as entrance into the "New Covenant."

³³"Calvin's theology was not without controversy. Pierre Caroli, a Protestant minister in Lausanne accused Calvin, as well as Viret and Farel of Arianism in 1536. Calvin defended his beliefs on the Trinity in *Confessio de Trinitate propter calumnias P. Caroli*.^[94] In 1551 Jérôme-Hermès Bolsec, a physician in Geneva, attacked Calvin's doctrine of predestination and accused him of making God the author of sin. Bolsec was banished from the city, and after Calvin's death, he wrote a biography which severely maligned Calvin's character.^[95] In the following year, Joachim Westphal, a Gnesio-Lutheran pastor in Hamburg, condemned Calvin and Zwingli as heretics in denying the eucharistic doctrine of the union of Christ's body with the elements. Calvin's *Defensio sanae et orthodoxae doctrinae de sacramentis* (A Defense of the Sober and Orthodox Doctrine of the Sacrament) was his response in 1555.^[96] In 1556 Justus Velsius, a Dutch dissident, held a public disputation with Calvin during his visit to Frankfurt, in which Velsius defended free will against Calvin's doctrine of predestination. Following the execution of Servetus, a close associate of Calvin, Sebastian Castellio, broke with him on the issue of the treatment of heretics. In Castellio's *Treatise on Heretics* (1554), he argued for a focus on Christ's moral teachings in place of the vanity of theology,^[97] and he afterward developed a theory of tolerance based on biblical principles.^[98]" ["John Calvin: Controversies," wikipedia.org]

³⁴"I have had much conversation with many Jews: I have never seen either a drop of piety or a grain of truth or ingenuousness – nay, I have never found common sense in any Jew." [Calvin's commentary of Daniel 2:44–45 translated by Myers, Thomas. Calvin's Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1948, quoted in Lange van Ravenswaay 2009, p. 146]

In his political philosophy, Calvin advocated a mixture of democracy and aristocracy.³⁵ He could not conceive of a country or government not being 'Christian' officially and under the mandate of God's laws. Calvin's economic theory remained rather simple with agriculture and traditional crafts at the center of the economy of a government. Minimum interest rates on loans were allowed, and in a more liberal stance than that of Luther. But for both, work was intended to be man's expression of appreciation for God's grace. Loafing and begging were condemned but economic success was no real sign of God's grace either. But, this was later rejected and expanded by the growing secularization of Calvin. For example, in the tradition of later Calvinism, Max Weber would develop his theory of capitalism through stretching Calvin's economic teachings way beyond where Calvin went.

B. Influential Interpreters of Calvin

In the years following Calvin's death in 1564, his influence began spreading across much of Europe and gave rise to some Protestant Christian movements largely framed by his teachings. This influence had begun in the 1550s once he secured control over Geneva and became its definer both religiously and politically. He had his enemies elsewhere in both Switzerland and in Europe, but through his extensive writings and the generous attitude toward religious refugees from elsewhere in Europe he was able to spread his ideas well beyond the borders of Geneva.

To be sure, after his death and subsequently that of his successor, Theodore Beza (1605), the Geneva city council gradually regained control over areas of the life of its citizens that had previously been under church control. The influence of the church in the city began diminishing with a growing secularization process in the city. The school that Calvin founded was eclipsed in significance by the universities in Leiden and Heidelberg which took up the teachings of Calvin as new centers of his movement.

The greatest centers of influence of his teachings

³⁵"Although he was convinced that the Bible contained no blueprint for a certain form of government, Calvin favored a combination of democracy and aristocracy (mixed government). He appreciated the advantages of democracy.^[108] To further minimize the misuse of political power, Calvin proposed to divide it among several political institutions like the aristocracy, lower estates, or magistrates in a system of checks and balances (separation of powers). Finally, Calvin taught that if rulers rise up against God they lose their divine right and must be put down.^{[109][110]} State and church are separate, though they have to cooperate to the benefit of the people. Christian magistrates have to make sure that the church can fulfill its duties in freedom. In extreme cases the magistrates have to expel or execute dangerous heretics. But nobody can be forced to become a Protestant.^{[111][112]}" ["John Calvin," wikipedia.org]

emerged in the Netherlands and in Scotland.³⁶ And from there spread out to other parts of the world, including the new world of North America.³⁷

Over time, there emerges the movement that has come to be known as Calvinism. Although bearing his name, this movement is not a unified religious way of thinking by any stretch of the imagination. Some segments remain relatively true to Calvin's teachings, but other segments go well beyond them in ways that are contradictory to Calvin. The name 'Calvinism' was first coined in Europe by Lutherans who opposed the teachings of Calvin,³⁸ and a majority of those within the tradition prefer the term "Reformed" rather than Calvinism. Since the era of the Arminian controversy in the early seventeenth century, the Reformed Church of Protestantism distinguishes itself clearly from Lutheranism and then divides itself into the Arminians and the Calvinists. But, as used in the modern world, the terms Reformed and Calvinist are not synonymous terms with Reformed including Arminians, even though in the American English speaking world the two terms Reformed and Calvinist are often pretty much used interchangeably. Still further, under the label "Calvinism" are identifiable sub-groups: Amyraldism; Hyper-Calvinism; Neo-Calvinism; Christian Reconstructionism; and New Calvinism.

In theology, the Reformed theological tradition

³⁶Due to Calvin's missionary work in France, his programme of reform eventually reached the French-speaking provinces of the Netherlands. Calvinism was adopted in the Electorate of the Palatinate under Frederick III, which led to the formulation of the Heidelberg Catechism in 1563. This and the Belgic Confession were adopted as confessional standards in the first synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1571. Leading divines, either Calvinist or those sympathetic to Calvinism, settled in England (Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, and Jan Laski) and Scotland (John Knox). During the English Civil War, the Calvinistic Puritans produced the Westminster Confession, which became the confessional standard for Presbyterians in the English-speaking world.

As the Ottoman Empire did not force Muslim conversion on its conquered western territories, the ideas of reformation were quickly adopted in the occupied 2/3 of Hungary (the Habsburg-ruled 1/3 part of Hungary remained catholic). A Reformed Constitutional Synod was held in 1567 in Debrecen, the main hub of Hungarian Calvinism, where the Second Helvetic Confession was adopted as the official confession of Hungarian Calvinists. Having established itself in Europe, the movement continued to spread to other parts of the world including North America, South Africa, and Korea.^[120] ["John Calvin," wikipedia.org]

³⁷In the English speaking world, one must consider the Geneva Bible translation into English with its extensive study notes based on Calvin's teachings. Although Calvin had no personal involvement, the English Puritan refugees in Geneva produced this study Bible heavily influenced by his teachings. Through being widely distributed across England and Scotland by the Puritans, it came to have enormous influence in shaping the English Protestant Reformation. And through the Puritans, its impact on the colonies in North America was huge as well.

³⁸See Bengt Häggglund, *Theologians Historia [History of Theology]* (in German). Translated by Gene J. Lund (Fourth Revised ed. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007) for more details.

Calvin's Circles of Influence



normally addresses all the points of Christian theology, while the term Calvinism more often than not just centers on two theological topics: soteriology and predestination. Some would add the third topic of the sovereignty of God.

Successors of Calvin can be grouped into three groups: 1) those sharing many of Calvin's beliefs in his life time; 2) twentieth century Calvinists; and 3) contemporary Reformed theologians.³⁹ Clearly this has limited helpfulness, but can serve as a starting point of discussion.⁴⁰

Within the limits of the available resources, an attempt will be made to broaden the perspective to a more inclusive view. Needing attention also are the denominational groups emerging from the teachings of Calvin,⁴¹ and very importantly the training schools that

³⁹Early influential Reformed theologians include John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Bucer, Heinrich Bullinger, Peter Martyr Vermigli, Theodor Beza, and John Knox. In the twentieth century, Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, B. B. Warfield, Karl Barth, and Cornelius Van Til were influential, while contemporary Reformed theologians include J. I. Packer, R. C. Sproul, David F. Wells, and Michael Horton." ["Calvinism," wikipedia.org]. One should note that the second and third groups are mostly from the English speaking world.

⁴⁰One very obvious limitation is that it is more focused on North America and also on more conservative scholars in the American Reformed tradition. The modern European Reformed scholarship along with those outside a very conservation stance are ignored by this article in Wikipedia.

⁴¹Typically but not universally, the term in English "Reformed Church" will specify the Calvinistic tradition on the European continent, while "Presbyterian Church" specifies its counterpart in the English speaking world with origins in the British Isles. Because of missionary expansion, however, elsewhere in the world, the distinction between these two terms becomes blurred substantially. Usually the distinction will be based more on organizational and governing structures of the different groups of Calvinistic churches and denominations. Some version of Synodal government prevails, but the Hungarian Reformed Church, along with its counterpart in

help perpetuate his teachings. As a foundation to the various systems of teachings coming from Calvin lay the numerous confessions of faith or credal declarations.

Contemporaries of Calvin. In Calvin's lifetime quite a number of individuals were either influential upon Calvin, or heavily influenced by him, or both.⁴² Early on Calvin enjoyed relatively friendly relationships with Martin Luther in Germany, although later the relationship was more formal and less friendly. Being a native of France but living in Switzerland⁴³ helped shape the friendships of Calvin substantially. He never lost his 'refugee' status in Switzerland, especially in the eyes of his critics, even after spending

a considerable part of his adult life in Geneva. This shaped his circle of close friends a great deal.

The Reformed tradition actually had its beginnings not with Calvin but with Huldrych Zwingli in Zürich in the 1520s.⁴⁴ The



Romania and Poland, are the only ones to retain the office of bishop as well.

^{42c}John Calvin is the most well-known Reformed theologian of the generation following Zwingli's death, but recent scholarship has argued that several previously overlooked individuals had at least as much influence on the development of Reformed Christianity and represented diverse theological viewpoints.^[14] Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, wrote more accessibly than his predecessor and his writings achieved wide distribution long after his death.^[15] Following Zwingli he argued for a figurative significance of the Eucharist.^[16] Peter Martyr Vermigli, the most highly trained Reformed theologian of this era,^[17] taught a strong doctrine of double predestination, which teaches that God has chosen to save people for salvation and others for damnation, and held that Christ was really, though spiritually, present in the Eucharist, a position that Calvin would also take.^[18] Wolfgang Musculus's *Common Places of the Christian Religion* was the first Reformed systematic work of theology. Musculus taught a spiritual presence of Christ in the Eucharist and a cautious form of double predestination.^[19]⁷⁷ ["History of Calvinism," wikipedia.org]

^{43c}Switzerland (German: Schweiz[ˈʃvaɪts]; French: Suisse [sɥis]; Italian: Svizzera [ˈsvittsera]; Romansh: Svizra [ˈʒviːtsrə] or [ˈʒviːtsɐːv]), officially the Swiss Confederation (Latin: Confoederatio Helvetica, hence its abbreviation CH), is a federal parliamentary republic consisting of 26 cantons, with Bern as the seat of the federal authorities. The country is situated in Western and Central Europe, where it is bordered by Germany to the north, France to the west, Italy to the south, and Austria and Liechtenstein to the east. ["Switzerland," wikipedia.org]

^{44c}The Protestant Reformation in Switzerland was promoted initially by Huldrych Zwingli, who gained the support of the magistrate (Mark Reust) and population of Zürich in the 1520s. It led to significant changes in civil life and state matters in Zürich and spread to several other cantons of the Old Swiss Confederacy. Seven cantons remained Roman Catholic, though, which led to inter-cantonal wars known as the Wars of Kappel. After the victory of the Catholic cantons in 1531, they proceeded to institute counter-reformatory policies in some regions. The schism and distrust

city of Zürich became both a hub of reforming efforts as well as a model for other cantons across Switzerland.⁴⁵ Zwingli came to Zürich as a Catholic priest to between Catholic and Protestant cantons would define their interior politics and paralyse any common foreign policy until well into the 18th century.

"Despite their religious differences, and despite an exclusively Catholic defence alliance of the seven Catholic cantons (Goldener Bund), further major armed conflicts directly between the cantons did not occur. Soldiers from both sides fought in the French Wars of Religion.

"In the Thirty Years' War, the thirteen cantons managed to maintain their neutrality, partly because all major powers in Europe depended on Swiss mercenaries, and would not let Switzerland fall into the hands of one of their rivals. The Three Leagues (Drei Bünde) of the Grisons, at that time not yet a member of the confederacy, were involved in the war from 1620 on, which led to their loss of the Valtellina from 1623 to 1639."

["Reformation in Switzerland," wikipedia.org]

^{45c}After the violent conflicts of the late 15th century the Swiss cantons had had a generation of relative political stability.^[1] As part of their struggle for independence, they had already in the 15th century sought to limit the influence of the Church on their political sovereignty. Many monasteries had already come under secular supervision, and the administration of schools was in the hands of the cantons, although the teachers generally still were priests.

"Nevertheless, many of the problems of the Church also existed in the Swiss Confederacy. Many a cleric as well as the Church as a whole enjoyed a luxury lifestyle in stark contrast to the conditions the large majority of the population lived in; this luxury was financed by high church taxes and abundant sale of indulgences. Many priests were badly educated, and spiritual Church doctrines were often disregarded. Many priests did not live in celibacy but in concubinage. The new reformatory ideas thus fell on fertile ground.

"The main proponent of the Reformation in Switzerland was Ulrich Zwingli, whose actions during the Affair of the Sausages are now considered to be the start of the Reformation in Switzerland.^[2] His own studies, in the renaissance humanist tradition, had led him to preach against injustices and hierarchies in the Church already in 1516 while he was still a priest in Einsiedeln. When he was called to Zürich, he expanded his criticism also onto political topics and in particular condemned the mercenary business. His ideas were received favourably, especially by entrepreneurs, businessmen, and the guilds. The first disputation of Zürich of 1523 was the breakthrough: the city council decided to implement his reformatory

serve as pastor of the Grossmünster in the city in 1518. From that pulpit, he began his efforts at reforming the Catholic Church.⁴⁶ By 1525, he succeeded in getting a new communion liturgy introduced that replaced the Catholic Mass.⁴⁷

He clashed intensely with the emerging Anabaptist movement and instituted severe persecution of them in Zürich.⁴⁸ Felix Manz was



The Grossmünster in Zürich

plans and to convert to Protestantism.

“In the following two years, profound changes took place in Zürich. The Church was thoroughly secularised. Priests were relieved from celibacy, the opulent decorations in the churches were thrown out. The state assumed the administration of Church properties, financing the social works (which up to then were managed entirely by the Church), and also paid the priests. The last abbess of the Fraumünster, Katharina von Zimmern, turned over the convent including all of its rights and possessions to the city authorities on 30 November 1524. She even married the next year.

John Calvin

“Over the next few years, the cities of St. Gallen, Schaffhausen, Basel, Bienne, Mulhouse, and finally Bern (in 1528) all followed the example set by Zürich. Their subject territories were converted to Protestantism by decree. In Basel, reformer Johannes Oecolampadius was active, in St. Gallen, the Reformation was adopted by mayor Joachim Vadian. In Glarus, Appenzell, and in the Grisons, which all three had a more republican structure, individual communes decided for or against the Reformation. In the French-speaking parts, reformers like William Farel had been preaching the new faith under Bernese protection since the 1520s, but only in 1536, just before John Calvin arrived there, did the city of Geneva convert to Protestantism. The same year, Bern conquered the hitherto Savoyard Vaud and also instituted Protestantism there.”

[“Reformation in Switzerland,” wikipedia.org]

⁴⁶In a manner so often true with historical turning points, a relatively minor event turned into a major shift in history. For Zürich, this moment came in 1522 when Zwingli advocated eating sausages during the Roman Catholic Lent in open rebellion against Catholic teaching. This came to be known as the “Affair of the Sausages” (wikipedia.org).

⁴⁷In 1518, Zwingli became the pastor of the Grossmünster church in Zurich where he began to preach ideas on reforming the Catholic Church. In his first public controversy in 1522, he attacked the custom of fasting during Lent. In his publications, he noted corruption in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, promoted clerical marriage, and attacked the use of images in places of worship. In 1525, Zwingli introduced a new communion liturgy to replace the Mass. Zwingli also clashed with the Anabaptists, which resulted in their persecution.” [“Huldrych Zwingli,” wikipedia.org]

⁴⁸“Anabaptists in Switzerland began as an offshoot of the church reforms instigated by Ulrich Zwingli. As early as 1522 it became evident that Zwingli was on a path of reform preaching when he began to question or criticize such Catholic practices as tithes, the mass, and even infant baptism. Zwingli had gathered a group of reform-minded men around him, with whom he studied Classic literature and the Scriptures. However, some of these young men began to feel that Zwingli was not moving fast enough in his reform. The division between Zwingli and his more radical disciples became

executed by drowning in the Limmat River on Jan. 5, 1527, and George Blaurock was burned at the stake in Zürich on Sept. 6, 1529. One of the non-biblical points of contention was that the Anabaptists contended that only the Word of God bound individuals to religious beliefs.⁴⁹ But Zwingli insisted that the city council must make final decisions even of a religious nature for the territory under their control.

Through the 1520s and early 1530s, a number of other Swiss cantons switched over to the position of Zwingli and followed the example of Zürich.⁵⁰ But several of the cantons remained staunchly Roman Catholic and refused to join the reforming movement: Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Lucerne, and Zug.⁵¹ To be sure,

apparent in an October, 1523 disputation held in Zurich. When the discussion of the mass was about to be ended without making any actual change in practice, Conrad Grebel stood up and asked ‘what should be done about the mass?’ Zwingli responded by saying the Council would make that decision. At this point, Simon Stumpf, a radical priest from Hongg, answered saying, ‘The decision has already been made by the Spirit of God.’^{[18]:79} [“Anabaptist,” wikipedia.org]

⁴⁹Most Baptist groups today will claim at least a spiritual heritage with the Radical Reformation Anabaptists under the leadership of John Smyth. Whether historical links between the beginnings of Baptist church starting in Amsterdam in 1609 exist or not is frequently debated among Baptist historians. For more details see “1609-2009: Celebrating 400 Years of Baptist Life and Witness,” bwa-baptist-heritage-org.

⁵⁰“Over the next few years, the cities of St. Gallen, Schaffhausen, Basel, Bienne, Mulhouse, and finally Bern (in 1528) all followed the example set by Zürich. Their subject territories were converted to Protestantism by decree. In Basel, reformer Johannes Oecolampadius was active, in St. Gallen, the Reformation was adopted by mayor Joachim Vadian. In Glarus, Appenzell, and in the Grisons, which all three had a more republican structure, individual communes decided for or against the Reformation. In the French-speaking parts, reformers like William Farel had been preaching the new faith under Bernese protection since the 1520s, but only in 1536, just before John Calvin arrived there, did the city of Geneva convert to Protestantism. The same year, Bern conquered the hitherto Savoyard Vaud and also instituted Protestantism there.” [“Reformation in Switzerland,” wikipedia.org]

⁵¹“The success of the Reformation in Zürich and its rapid territorial expansion definitely made this religious renewal a political issue and a major source of conflict between the thirteen cantons. The alpine cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Lucerne, and Zug remained staunchly Catholic. Their opposition was not uniquely a question of faith; economic reasons also played a role. Besides on agriculture, their economy depended to a large degree on the mercenary services and the financial recompensations for the same. They could not afford to lose this source of income, which was a major target of reformatory criticism. In contrast, the cities’ economies were more diversified, including strong crafts and guilds as well as a budding industrial sector. Fribourg and Solothurn also remained Catholic.

“The five alpine cantons perceived the Reformation as a threat early on; already in 1524 they formed the ‘League of the Five Cantons’ (Bund der fünf Orte) to combat the spreading of the new faith. Both sides tried to strengthen their positions by concluding defensive alliances with third parties: the Protestant cantons formed a

the Roman Catholic Counter Reformation in the second half of the 1500s succeeded in regaining some of the Swiss cantons away from the Protestants. Tugs of war back and forth even through the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) pushed the Catholic and Protestant cantons into relative neutrality, although both sides provided mercenary soldiers for the war. The emergence of the Swiss Tagsatzung as the executive council of the Swiss Confederacy helped promote this neutral stance.

Zwingli and Luther agreed on many points of doctrine but bitterly differed from one another on several significant points of doctrine, especially in regard to the meaning of the Lord's Supper.⁵² When Zwingli

city alliance, including the Protestant cities of Konstanz and Strasbourg (Christliches Burgrecht); the Catholic ones entered a pact with Ferdinand of Austria.

"In the tense atmosphere, small incidents could easily escalate. Conflicts arose especially over the situation in the common territories, where the administration changed bi-annually among cantons and thus switched between Catholic and Protestant rules. Several mediation attempts failed such as the disputation of Baden in 1526.

"After numerous minor incidents and provocations from both sides, a Protestant pastor was burned on the stake in Schwyz in 1529, and in retaliation Zürich declared war. By mediation of the other cantons, open war (known as the First War of Kappel) was barely avoided, but the peace agreement (Erster Landfriede) was not exactly favourable for the Catholic party, who had to dissolve its alliance with the Austrian Habsburgs. The tensions remained essentially unresolved.

"Two years later, the second war of Kappel broke out. Zürich was taking the refusal of the Catholic cantons to help the Grisons in the Musso war as a pretext, but on 11 October 1531, the Catholic cantons decisively defeated the forces of Zürich in the battle of Kappel am Albis. Zwingli was killed on the battlefield. The Protestant cantons had to agree to a peace treaty, the so-called Zweiter Kappeler Landfriede, which forced the dissolution of the Protestant alliance (Christliches Burgrecht). It gave Catholicism the priority in the common territories, but allowed communes that had already converted to remain Protestant. Only strategically important places such as the Freiamt or those along the route from Schwyz to the Rhine valley at Sargans (and thus to the Alpine passes in the Grisons) were forcibly re-Catholicised. In their own territories, the cantons remained free to implement one or the other religion. The peace thus prescribed the *Cuius regio, eius religio*-principle that would also be adopted in the peace of Augsburg in the Holy Roman Empire in 1555. Politically, this gave the Catholic cantons a majority in the Tagsatzung, the federal diet of the confederacy.

"When their Protestant city alliance was dissolved, Zürich and the southern German cities joined the Schmalkaldic League, but in the German religious wars of 1546/47, Zürich and the other Swiss Protestant cantons remained strictly neutral. With the victory of Charles V the previously close relations to the Swabian Protestant cities in the Holy Roman Empire were severed: many cities, like Konstanz, were re-Catholicised and many were placed under a strictly aristocratic rule."

[“Reformation in Switzerland,” wikipedia.org]

⁵²Zwingli, who had studied in Basel while Erasmus had been there, had arrived at a more radical renewal than Luther and his ideas differed from the latter in several points. A reconciliation attempt at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 failed. Although the two charismatic leaders found a consensus on fourteen points, they kept differing on the last one on the Eucharist: Luther maintained that through sacramental union the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper

was killed on the battlefield in the Second War of Kappel in 1531, Heinrich Bullinger succeeded him in spiritual leadership of Zürich. It was through Bullinger that the teachings of Zwingli and of Calvin gradually were merged to form the foundation for the Reformed



Church movement in Europe. The personalities of Bullinger and Calvin made working together much easier and enabled advancement in religious understanding for the Reformed movement in Switzerland.⁵³ The especially important *Consensus Tigurinus* brought unity of belief about the Lord's Supper between these two reformers, although it took a second revision in 1549 completed by Calvin, Bullinger, and William Farel to achieve the desired unity. It was published in 1551 in both Zürich and Geneva, and helped win over to a more favourable attitude Phillip Melancthon, the German Lutheran reformer and theologian at Wittenberg, along with it being very favourably received in France, English and parts of Germany.

By the time Calvin arrived in Geneva in 1536, the city had only recently shifted over to Protestantism. His fellow Frenchman, William Farel, played the pivotal role in getting Calvin to the city. Calvin's very rigid guidelines in his initial proposal, jointly developed with Farel, to the city council did not find acceptance and thus both were banned from the city in 1538. Calvin spent the next three years in Strasbourg (1538-1541). He was unable to return for three years



became truly the flesh and blood of Christ, whereas Zwingli considered bread and wine only symbols. This schism and the defeat of Zürich in the Second War of Kappel in 1531, where Zwingli was killed on the battlefield, were a serious setback, ultimately limiting Zwinglianism to parts of the Swiss confederacy and preventing its adoption in areas north of the river Rhine.” [“Reformation in Switzerland,” wikipedia.org]

⁵³“After Zwingli's death, Heinrich Bullinger took over his post in Zürich. Reformers in Switzerland continued for the next decades to reform the Church and to improve its acceptance by the common people. Bullinger in particular also tried bridging the differences between Zwinglianism and Calvinism. He was instrumental in establishing the *Consensus Tigurinus* of 1549 with John Calvin and the *Confessio Helvetica posterior* of 1566, which finally included all Protestant cantons and associates of the confederacy. The *Confessio* was also accepted in other European Protestant regions in Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, the Netherlands, and Scotland, and together with the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563, where Bullinger also played an important role, and the *Canons of Dordrecht* of 1619 it would become the theological foundation of Protestantism of the Calvinist strain.” [“Reformation in Switzerland,” wikipedia.org]

until a city election that installed new council members more sympathetic to his ideas. Consequently the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* was passed by the town council on Nov. 20, 1541.⁵⁴ Church music became a point of interest with successive revisions of his earlier *La Forme des Prières et Chants Ecclésiastiques* (The Form of Prayers and Church Hymns) beginning in 1542 with the help of French refugees Clément Marot and Louis Bourgeois, whom Calvin took in and who helped him with successive revisions. In 1542 also came the publication of *Catéchisme de l'Eglise de Genève* (Catechism of the Church of Geneva) that was modelled after Martin Bucer's *Kurze Schriftliche Erklärung* of 1534. Calvin had been influenced by Bucer while at Strasbourg. Bucer, a German Lutheran, worked tirelessly to bring closer together the Reformed tradition and the Lutheran tradition. When exiled to England in 1549, Bucer under the sponsorship of Thomas Crammer exerted substantial influence on the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* in the Church of England. His primary legacy was as an early pioneer of ecumenism.



The Italian, Peter Martyr Vermigli, stands on the outer circle of Protestant reformers with a Reformed orientation. He had minimal direct contact with Calvin, although he was heavily influenced by Heinrich Bullinger at Zürich, Martin Bucer at Strasbourg, and others in the larger circle of Reformed Church oriented reformers. After a series of scrapes with the Roman Catholic Church in Italy, and time spent as a refuge in Zürich, Vermigli was invited by Thomas Crammer in 1547 to come to England where he was appointed Regius Professor at Oxford and canon of Christ Church Oxford. Despite ups and downs there, he managed to exert considerable influence toward Calvin's teachings on the Church of England through several projects that he



⁵⁴“In supporting Calvin’s proposals for reforms, the council of Geneva passed the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on 20 November 1541. The ordinances defined four orders of ministerial function: pastors to preach and to administer the sacraments; doctors to instruct believers in the faith; elders to provide discipline; and deacons to care for the poor and needy.^[33] They also called for the creation of the *Consistoire* (Consistory), an ecclesiastical court composed of the lay elders and the ministers. The city government retained the power to summon persons before the court, and the Consistory could judge only ecclesiastical matters having no civil jurisdiction. Originally, the court had the power to mete out sentences, with excommunication as its most severe penalty. However, the government contested this power and on 19 March 1543 the council decided that all sentencing would be carried out by the government.^[34]” [“John Calvin,” wikipedia.org]

worked on.⁵⁵

Theodore Beza, a Frenchman, arrived in Geneva on Oct. 23, 1548 along with his wife to be Claudine, fleeing persecution after experiencing a conversion while living in Paris and struggling with illness. Calvin took him in and married them in the church at Geneva. Eventually he settled in Lausanne where he found appointment as a professor of Greek in the academy in Nov. 1549. After publishing several writings and traveling in support persecuted Protestant groups in France and Switzerland, Beza moved to Geneva in 1558 to teach Greek at Calvin's newly established school. In the years of 1560 to 1563, Beza made several trips to France in support of Protestant groups to help their cause. But the needs of Geneva with a sickly Calvin demanded his full attention in the city, and upon Calvin's passing in 1564 Beza became his successor in leading the city in spiritual matters. His more pleasant personality enabled him to mediate tensions and issues in the city, along producing several major publications and doing some traveling in behalf of the Protestant cause until his death on Oct. 13, 1605. Through him, Calvin's legacy was secured for Geneva and much of Europe.



John Knox, the Scottish clergyman (1514-1572), served in the Church of England until forced to flee to Geneva with the re-establishment of Roman Catholicism by Queen Mary Tudor after coming to power in August of 1553. Thus forced to resign his position as a royal chaplain for the Church of England and leave the country, Knox moved to Geneva where he came under the influence of John Calvin.⁵⁶ In less than a year of working with Calvin in Geneva,⁵⁷ Knox was persuad-



⁵⁵“Indeed, Vermigli, along with Martin Bucer, who was Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, appears to have profoundly affected the views of Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley, and historians have proven definitively that Vermigli had a great deal of influence in the modifications of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1552, the formulation of the *Forty-Two Articles of Religion* of 1553, and Cranmer's revision of canon law from 1551–1553, the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum*.^[18] [“Peter Martyr Vermigli,” wikipedia.org]

⁵⁶“Knox moved to Geneva and then to Frankfurt. In Geneva he met John Calvin, from whom he gained experience and knowledge of Reformed theology and Presbyterian polity. He created a new order of service, which was eventually adopted by the reformed church in Scotland. He left Geneva to head the English refugee church in Frankfurt but he was forced to leave over differences concerning the liturgy, thus ending his association with the Church of England.” [“John Knox,” wikipedia.org]

⁵⁷“Knox disembarked in Dieppe, France, and continued to Geneva, where John Calvin had established his authority. When Knox arrived Calvin was in a difficult position. He had recently pros-

ed by Calvin to go to Frankfurt to lead the English Reformed church there made up of exiles from England that arrived in the city in June of 1554.⁵⁸ This congregation soon fell into deep inner turmoil over liturgy and organizational issues.⁵⁹ Although the Frankfurt group

executed the execution of the scholar Michael Servetus for heresy. Knox asked Calvin four difficult political questions: whether a minor could rule by divine right, whether a female could rule and transfer sovereignty to her husband, whether people should obey ungodly or idolatrous rulers, and what party godly persons should follow if they resisted an idolatrous ruler.^[41] Calvin gave cautious replies and referred him to the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger in Zürich. Bullinger's responses were equally cautious; but Knox had already made up his mind. On 20 July 1554, he published a pamphlet attacking Mary Tudor and the bishops who had brought her to the throne.^[42] He also attacked the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, calling him 'no less enemy to Christ than was Nero'.^[43] ["John Knox," wikipedia.org]

⁵⁸“In a letter dated 24 September 1554, Knox received an invitation from a congregation of English exiles in Frankfurt to become one of their ministers. He accepted the call with Calvin's blessing. But no sooner had he arrived than he found himself in a conflict. The first set of refugees to arrive in Frankfurt had subscribed to a reformed liturgy and used a modified version of the Book of Common Prayer. More recently arrived refugees, however, including Edmund Grindal, the future Archbishop of Canterbury, favoured a stricter application of the book. When Knox and a supporting colleague, William Whittingham, wrote to Calvin for advice, they were told to avoid contention. Knox therefore agreed on a temporary order of service based on a compromise between the two sides. This delicate balance was disturbed when a new batch of refugees arrived that included Richard Cox, one of the principal authors of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Cox brought Knox's pamphlet attacking the emperor to the attention of the Frankfurt authorities, who advised that Knox leave. His departure from Frankfurt on 26 March 1555 marked his final breach with the Church of England. [44]” ["John Knox," wikipedia.org]

⁵⁹“The first English exile group in Frankfurt arrived on 27 June 1554. With the help of a local magistrate, they secured the use of a vacant church building. They held their first service on 29 July using a reformed liturgy drawn up by William Whittingham. The congregation adopted a semi-presbyterian system where deacons were expected to preach.

“At the request of local authorities in this Lutheran city, the English church order had been made to conform to the newly established French reformed church in Frankfurt. The French church included a number of Walloon weavers who had been brought to England by Protector Somerset. Since then they had been under the supervision of Valerand Poullain, formerly John Calvin's successor as minister of the French congregation in Strasbourg. In England, Poullain's congregation had as much autonomy as the London Stranger churches and, like them, based their church order on the models of Zwingli and Calvin.

“Following this continental reformed precedent, the English exiles in Frankfurt offered themselves as the model church for all the English in exile and put out a call for ministers from the other congregations. However, they had gone further than many of their countrymen would follow, particularly those in Strasbourg and Zürich who wanted to retain use of the second (1552) Edwardian Book of Common Prayer. For that reason the English Church at Frankfurt became preoccupied with disputes over the use of the prayerbook and church order in general.

“The chief members of the Frankfurt congregation during its existence were David Whitehead, Sandys, Nowell, Foxe, Bale,

did not accept the newly structured liturgy developed by Knox, he took it with him on his return to Scotland where controversy followed him.⁶⁰ In September of 1556, Knox accepted the call to pastor a congregation in Geneva and he moved his wife and mother-in-law to Geneva where he spent two very happy years serving in the city.⁶¹

Horne, Whittingham, Knox, Aylmer, Bentham, Sampson, Kelke, Chambers, Isaac, both Knollyses, John and Christopher Hales, Richard Hilles, Bartholomew Traheron, Robert Crowley, Thomas Cole, William Turner, Robert Wisdome. An informal university established by the congregation had Horne teaching Hebrew, John Mullins (who came from Zurich after Knox left) teaching Greek, and Traheron teaching theology.”

[“Marian exiles,” wikipedia.org]

⁶⁰“After his return to Geneva, Knox was chosen to be the minister at a new place of worship petitioned from Calvin. In the meantime, Elizabeth Bowes wrote to Knox, asking him to return to Marjorie in Scotland, which he did at the end of August.^[45] Despite initial doubts about the state of the Reformation in Scotland, Knox found the country significantly changed since he was carried off in the galley in 1547. When he toured various parts of Scotland preaching the reformed doctrines and liturgy, he was welcomed by many of the nobility including two future regents of Scotland, the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Mar.^[46]

“Though the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, made no move to act against Knox, his activities caused concern among the church authorities. The bishops of Scotland viewed him as a threat to their authority and summoned him to appear in Edinburgh on 15 May 1556. He was accompanied to the trial by so many influential persons that the bishops decided to call the hearing off. Knox was now free to preach openly in Edinburgh. William Keith, the Earl Marischal, was impressed and urged Knox to write to the Queen Regent. Knox's unusually respectful letter urged her to support the Reformation and overthrow the church hierarchy. Queen Mary took the letter as a joke and ignored it.^[47]” ["John Knox," wikipedia.org]

⁶¹“Shortly after Knox sent the letter to the Queen Regent, he suddenly announced that he felt his duty was to return to Geneva. In the previous year on 1 November 1555, the congregation in Geneva had elected Knox as their minister and he decided to take up the post.^[48] He wrote a final letter of advice to his supporters and left Scotland with his wife and mother-in-law. He arrived in Geneva on 13 September 1556.^[49]

“For the next two years, he lived a happy life in Geneva. He recommended Geneva to his friends in England as the best place of asylum for Protestants. In one letter he wrote:

I neither fear nor eschame to say, is the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles. In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached; but manners and religion so sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place...^{50]}

Knox led a busy life in Geneva. He preached three sermons a week, each lasting well over two hours. The services used a liturgy that was derived by Knox and other ministers from Calvin's *Formes des Prières Ecclésiastiques*.^[51] The church in which he preached, the Église de Notre Dame la Neuve — now known as the Auditoire de Calvin — had been granted by the municipal authorities, at Calvin's request, for the use of the English and Italian congregations. Knox's two sons, Nathaniel and Eleazar, were born in Geneva, with Whittingham and Myles Coverdale their respective godfathers.^[52]

“In the summer of 1558, Knox published his best known pamphlet, The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women. In calling the 'regiment' or rule of women 'monstruous',

His arrival in Edinburgh in 1559 again was accompanied by controversy with the monarchs in power. Through a series of events including some military battles, Scotland eventually -- by 1560 -- became officially Protestant and free from British and French interference.⁶² The Treaty of Edinburgh on July 6, 1560

he meant that it was 'unnatural'. The pamphlet has been called a classic of misogyny. Knox states that his purpose was to demonstrate 'how abominable before God is the Empire or Rule of a wicked woman, yea, of a traiteresse and bastard'.^[53] The women rulers that Knox had in mind were Queen Mary I of England and Mary of Guise, the Dowager Queen of Scotland and regent on behalf of her daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots. Knox's prejudices against women were not unusual in his day; however, even he was aware that the pamphlet was dangerously seditious.^[54] He therefore published it anonymously and did not tell Calvin, who denied knowledge of it until a year after its publication, that he had written it. In England, the pamphlet was officially condemned by royal proclamation. The impact of the document was complicated later that year, when Elizabeth Tudor became Queen of England. Although Knox had not targeted Elizabeth, he had deeply offended her, and she never forgave him.

"With a Protestant on the throne, the English refugees in Geneva prepared to return home. Knox himself decided to return to Scotland. Before his departure, various honours were conferred on him, including the freedom of the city of Geneva. Knox left in January 1559, but he did not arrive in Scotland until 2 May 1559, owing to Elizabeth's refusal to issue him a passport through England.^[55]" ["John Knox," wikipedia.org]

⁶²"Two days after Knox arrived in Edinburgh, he proceeded to Dundee where a large number of Protestant sympathizers had gathered. Knox was declared an outlaw, and the Queen Regent summoned the Protestants to Stirling. Fearing the possibility of a summary trial and execution, the Protestants proceeded instead to Perth, a walled town that could be defended in case of a siege. At the church of St John the Baptist, Knox preached a fiery sermon and a small incident precipitated into a riot. A mob poured into the church and it was soon gutted. The mob then attacked two friaries in the town, looting their gold and silver and smashing images. Mary of Guise gathered those nobles loyal to her and a small French army. She dispatched the Earl of Argyll and Lord Moray to offer terms and avert a war. She promised not to send any French troops into Perth if the Protestants evacuated the town. The Protestants agreed, but when the Queen Regent entered Perth, she garrisoned it with Scottish soldiers on the French pay roll. This was seen as treacherous by Lord Argyll and Lord Moray, who both switched sides and joined Knox, who now based himself in St Andrews. Knox's return to St Andrews fulfilled the prophecy he made in the galleys that he would one day preach again in its church. When he did give a sermon, the effect was the same as in Perth. The people engaged in vandalism and looting.^[56]

"With Protestant reinforcements arriving from neighbouring counties, the Queen Regent retreated to Dunbar. By now, the mob fury had spilled over central Scotland. Her own troops were on the verge of mutiny. On 30 June, the Protestant Lords of the Congregation occupied Edinburgh, though they were only able to hold it for a month. But even before their arrival, the mob had already sacked the churches and the friaries. On 1 July, Knox preached from the pulpit of St Giles', the most influential in the capital.^[57] The Lords of the Congregation negotiated their withdrawal from Edinburgh by the Articles of Leith signed 25 July 1559, and Mary of Guise promised freedom of conscience.^[58]

"Knox knew that the Queen Regent would ask for help from France. So he negotiated by letter under the assumed name John

signaled a major turning point for Protestantism in Scotland. From August of 1560 through January 1561, the Scottish Parliament passed a series of bills deposing the Catholic Church from Scotland and establishing the reformed doctrine as the official version of Christianity for the country. The Scots Confession, although passed by the parliament did not officially become law until 1567 after Mary, Queen of Scots was out of the picture. It remained in place until being replaced by the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1648. They hit a snag in January 1561 with the proposed *Book of Discipline* that reorganized both church and civil life around more democratic principles.⁶³ From 1561 to the end of his life on Nov. 24,

Sinclair with William Cecil, Elizabeth's chief adviser, for English support. Knox sailed secretly to Lindisfarne, off the northeast coast of England at the end of July, to meet James Croft and Sir Henry Percy at Berwick upon Tweed. Knox was indiscreet and news of his mission soon reached Mary of Guise. He returned to Edinburgh telling Croft he had to return to his flock, and suggested that Henry Balnaves should go to Cecil.^[59]

"When additional French troops arrived in Leith, Edinburgh's seaport, the Protestants responded by retaking Edinburgh. This time, on 24 October 1559, the Scottish nobility formally deposed Mary of Guise from the regency. Her secretary, William Maitland of Lethington, defected to the Protestant side, bringing his administrative skills. From then on, Maitland took over the political tasks, freeing Knox for the role of religious leader. For the final stage of the revolution, Maitland appealed to Scottish patriotism to fight French domination. Following the Treaty of Berwick, support from England finally arrived and by the end of March, a significant English army joined the Scottish Protestant forces. The sudden death of Mary of Guise in Edinburgh Castle on 10 June 1560 paved the way for an end to hostilities, the signing of the Treaty of Edinburgh, and the withdrawal of French and English troops from Scotland. On 19 July, Knox held a National Thanksgiving Service at St Giles'.^[60]" ["John Knox," wikipedia.org]

⁶³"On 1 August, the Scottish Parliament met to settle religious issues. Knox and five other ministers were called upon to draw up a new confession of faith. Within four days, the *Scots Confession* was presented to Parliament, voted upon, and approved. A week later, the Parliament passed three acts in one day: the first abolished the jurisdiction of the Pope in Scotland, the second condemned all doctrine and practice contrary to the reformed faith, and the third forbade the celebration of Mass in Scotland. Before the dissolution of Parliament, Knox and the other ministers were given the task of organising the newly reformed church or the Kirk. They would work for several months on the Book of Discipline, the document describing the organisation of the new church. During this period, Knox's wife, Marjorie, died in December 1560, leaving Knox to care for their two sons, aged three and a half and two years old. John Calvin, who had lost his own wife in 1549, wrote a letter of condolence.^[61]

"Parliament reconvened on 15 January 1561 to consider the Book of Discipline. The Kirk was to be run on democratic lines. Each congregation was free to choose or reject their own pastor; but once he was chosen, they could not fire him. Each parish was to be self-supporting, as far as possible. The bishops were replaced by ten to twelve "superintendents". The plan included a system of national education based on universality as a fundamental principle. Certain areas of law were placed under ecclesiastical authority.^[62] The Parliament did not approve the plan, however, mainly for

1572, Knox was largely engaged in a political tug of war with Mary, Queen of Scots. Her Catholic religion and his fiery preaching of Protestant doctrines clashed repeatedly both in public and in a few private encounters. On July 24, 1567 she was forced to abdicate her throne in Scotland in favor of her one-year old son, James. She found herself caught up also in a struggle with Elizabeth in England that eventually led to her execution on Feb. 8, 1587. Scotland remained in turmoil politically during most of this period. Knox, before his health broke in 1572, kept the controversy stirred up through his fiery preaching against the queen and others supporting the Catholics. And it was this controversial stance of Knox that slowly diminished his influence with a majority of the leading political figures in Scotland during the later years. His death was not officially noticed in any of the public registers of the time.⁶⁴

The legacy of Knox religiously lies mostly in his influencing Scotland to develop its own form of Protestantism, in sharp distinction from both Roman Catholicism and the Church of England. It came to be known as Presbyterianism,⁶⁵ largely because of the system of governance advocated through the model of Calvin's reasons of finance. The Kirk was to be financed out of the patrimony of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. Much of this was now in the hands of the nobles, who were reluctant to give up their possessions. A final decision on the plan was delayed because of the impending return of Mary, Queen of Scots.^[63]

[“John Knox,” wikipedia.org]

⁶⁴“Although his funeral was attended by the nobles of Scotland, no major politician or diplomat mentioned his death in their letters that survive. Mary, Queen of Scots made only two brief references to him in her letters.^[85] What the rulers feared, however, were Knox's ideas more than Knox himself. He was a ruthless and successful revolutionary and it was this revolutionary philosophy that had a great impact on the English Puritans. Despite his strictness and dogmatism, he has also been described as contributing to the struggle for genuine human freedom, by teaching a duty to oppose unjust government in order to bring about moral and spiritual change.^[85]”

“Knox was notable not so much for the overthrow of Roman Catholicism in Scotland, but for assuring the replacement of the papal religion with Presbyterianism rather than Anglicanism. It was thanks to Knox that the Presbyterian polity was established.^[86] In that regard, Knox is considered the founder of the Presbyterian denomination whose members number millions worldwide.^[87]”

[“John Knox,” wikipedia.org]

⁶⁵“Was Knox basically a Scottish John Calvin?”

“There is great agreement between them theologically, but Knox doesn't have the degree of sophistication, depth, and subtlety Calvin had. We have hardly any biblical exposition from Knox. We don't have a great corpus of theological works. His writings are quite limited compared with Calvin's enormous output. If you compare them, the best you could say was that theologically Knox was a mini-Calvin.

“In some respects, though, Knox was bolder than Calvin. He went farther than Calvin in advocating resistance to unjust rulers. And he wrote an impressive history of the Reformation; Calvin never wrote history.

“Actually, it's a little unfair to compare the two. Calvin worked mostly in one city. Knox had to work on a national canvas, which is

teaching in Geneva, where the city council and regional synod structures dominated the Swiss Reformed movement.⁶⁶ The depiction of a typical Sunday in Reformed Scotland under Knox's influence does seem stringent to most of us today.⁶⁷ Although Knox composed several writings, his primary published work is the five vol-

clearly more difficult.”

[*Christian History Magazine* - Issue 46: *John Knox & the Scottish Reformation* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1995). Cf. “The Christian History Interview—Prophet without Honor?” by David F. Wright]

⁶⁶“How much, then, do the tens of millions of Presbyterians worldwide owe to John Knox?”

“If by *presbyterianism*, you mean elders working together in a hierarchy of courts of the church — not much. That emerges clearly in *The Second Book of Discipline* (1578) and the work of Andrew Melville, who leads the reformed cause after Knox's death (1572). Many scholars see Melville as the real architect of *presbyterianism*. Still, the building blocks and general vision of *presbyterianism* are in place under Knox. He rejected the papacy and distrusted having a monarch rule the church. He swept away those alternatives and led a quest for government of the church by its own officers.”

[*Christian History Magazine* - Issue 46: *John Knox & the Scottish Reformation* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1995). Cf. “The Christian History Interview—Prophet without Honor?” by David F. Wright]

⁶⁷“Sunday in Reformed Scotland*”

“*Protestant services were lean and (to some) mean.*”

“Worship in post-1560 Scotland was radically simplified. About a half-hour before Sunday worship, a bell rang warning the town of the beginning of worship (why people needed to be warned will be seen in a minute).

“With a second bell, the reader's service began: the lay leader read the Scriptures and some prayers and led the congregation in singing metrical psalms—biblical psalms set to contemporary tunes. This part of the service lasted an hour and closed with the ringing of a third bell. The minister then entered the pulpit. A psalm was sung between prayers and then came the sermon, followed by more prayers, the Creed, and the benediction.

“This was the first of two Sunday services. The second service was usually held in the afternoon and was largely devoted to teaching from a catechism—that of Calvin or Heidelberg or a catechism for children. Eventually, the service became known simply as ‘The Catechisms’ and was required to be held in every church.

“The Scottish reformers laid great emphasis upon faithful attendance at both of these Sunday services. At Aberdeen, for example, the town council insisted that all city officials, their families, and their servants attend worship. Beginning in 1598, fines were imposed on those who missed services, husbands being responsible for their wives, and masters for their servants.

“Other towns used other methods to honor the day. At Glasgow, a piper was threatened with excommunication if he played between sunrise and sunset on Sunday. At St. Andrews, five men were imprisoned for three hours for missing the sermon.

“Another problem was members' rushing out of church before the benediction. At some churches, therefore, a fine was imposed for leaving early; at others, guards were simply posted at the doors. Today, such measures seem harsh. But to the reformers, the work was an all-or-nothing proposition. Nothing less than the reform of every Scot was their goal.”

[*Christian History Magazine*-Issue 46: *John Knox & the Scottish Reformation* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1995).]

ume *The History of the Reformation in Scotland*. Mostly through his crusading stance, John Knox is remembered in today's world.⁶⁸

The Weltanschauung der Calvin. When a careful study of these Reformers of the sixteenth century is done, one dynamic repeatedly comes to the forefront in their training and cultural outlook: they were humanists in the classical meaning of the term, rather than in the modern sense of the term. That is, the refocusing of attention on people rather than on church dogma. This humanism came out of the Renaissance beginning in the late middle ages in Europe. Humanism in this era was not anti-religious at all and most humanists of this era assumed the legitimacy and necessity of religion for all human beings, and many contended that authentic Christianity was the one true religion.⁶⁹ Calvin's path of

⁶⁸“Among Christians today, Knox is relatively unknown. Why?”

“I suppose it has to do with his reputation as a woman-hater and advocate of violence — in many respects, he's a difficult person with whom to have sympathy. And so, though we enjoy his legacy, we're not much interested in him. That's true especially in Europe and America. Ironically, one country where there's more appreciation for Knox is Korea! Korean Presbyterians come here to Scotland in considerable numbers on a kind of pilgrimage.

“One problem with Knox's being ignored is that we are in danger of forgetting the good he did, which just reinforces a distorted image of him. For example, The Scots Confession of 1560 has by and large had a good press in the modern Church of Scotland; it's often admired as being a warm document—yet Knox doesn't get much credit for playing a key role in producing it.”

[*Christian History Magazine* - Issue 46: *John Knox & the Scottish Reformation* (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 1995). Cf. “The Christian History Interview—Prophet without Honor?” by David F. Wright]

⁶⁹“The basic training of the humanist was to speak well and write (typically, in the form of a letter). One of Petrarch's followers, Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406) was made chancellor of Florence, “whose interests he defended with his literary skill. The Visconti of Milan claimed that Salutati's pen had done more damage than ‘thirty squadrons of Florentine cavalry’”.^[21] Contrary to a still widely current interpretation that originated in Voigt's celebrated contemporary, Jacob Burckhardt,^[22] and which was adopted wholeheartedly, especially by those moderns calling themselves ‘humanists’,^[23] most specialists now do not characterise Renaissance humanism as a philosophical movement, nor in any way as anti-Christian or even anti-clerical. A modern historian has this to say:

Humanism was not an ideological programme but a body of literary knowledge and linguistic skill based on the “revival of good letters”, which was a revival of a late-antique philology and grammar. This is how the word “humanist” was understood by contemporaries, and if scholars would agree to accept the word in this sense rather than in the sense in which it was used in the nineteenth century we might be spared a good deal of useless argument. That humanism had profound social and even political consequences of the life of Italian courts is not to be doubted. But the idea that as a movement it was in some way inimical to the Church, or to the conservative social order in general is one that has been put forward for a century and more without any substantial proof being offered.

The nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt, in his classic work, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, noted as a “curious

liberated thinking from the dogma of Roman Catholicism began with his initial encounter with humanism at the Collège de la Marche in Paris with his famous Latin teacher Mathurin Cordier. It was continued with his enrollment in the Collège de Montaigu as a philosophy student. Even after his father withdrew him from his philosophy studies and enrolled him in the University of Orléans in 1525/1526, his interest in humanistic studies continued and found real encouragement from Andreas Alciati, a humanist law professor at University of Bourges in 1529. During his eighteen month stay at this university he also learned ancient Greek. According to his contemporary biographers Theodore Beza and Nicolas Colladon, this interest and study paved the way for his religious conversion and shift away from the Roman Catholic dogma. The humanistic principle of *ad fontes* pushed him to go back to the written source of Christianity, the Bible, and this resulted in rejection of the Catholic dogmatic interpretation of it. And this humanism stressed reading these ancient texts in their original languages, rather than in the Vulgate.

The emerging emphasis of Renaissance humanism on study of the classics in both Greek and Latin laid a critical foundation conceptually for the Protestant Reformation in general.⁷⁰ Not only Calvin but virtually

fact” that some men of the new culture were “men of the strictest piety, or even ascetics”. If he had meditated more deeply on the meaning of the careers of such humanists as Abrogio Traversari (1386–1439), the General of the Camaldolese Order, perhaps he would not have gone on to describe humanism in unqualified terms as “pagan”, and thus helped precipitate a century of infertile debate about the possible existence of something called “Christian humanism” which ought to be opposed to “pagan humanism”. --Peter Partner, *Renaissance Rome, Portrait of a Society 1500–1559* (University of California Press 1979) pp. 14–15.

“The *umanisti* criticised what they considered the barbarous Latin of the universities, but the revival of the humanities largely did not conflict with the teaching of traditional university subjects, which went on as before.^[24]

“Nor did the humanists view themselves as in conflict with Christianity. Some, like Salutati, were the Chancellors of Italian cities, but the majority (including Petrarch) were ordained as priests, and many worked as senior officials of the Papal court. Humanist Renaissance popes Nicholas V, Pius II, Sixtus IV, and Leo X wrote books and amassed huge libraries.^[25]

“In the high Renaissance, in fact, there was a hope that more direct knowledge of the wisdom of antiquity, including the writings of the Church fathers, the earliest known Greek texts of the Christian Gospels, and in some cases even the Jewish Kabbalah, would initiate a harmonious new era of universal agreement.^[26] With this end in view, Renaissance Church authorities afforded humanists what in retrospect appears a remarkable degree of freedom of thought.^{[27][28]} One humanist, the Greek Orthodox Platonist Gemistus Pletho (1355–1452), based in Mystras, Greece (but in contact with humanists in Florence, Venice, and Rome) taught a Christianised version of pagan polytheism.^[29]” [“Humanism,” wikipedia.org]

⁷⁰“The humanists' close study of Latin literary texts soon enabled them to discern historical differences in the writing styles of different periods. By analogy with what they saw as decline of

all of those leaders in the reformation during this era were heavily influenced by the emphases of humanism stressed in most of the emerging universities of that time.

This growing trend in the 1400 and 1500 hundreds created an atmosphere of exploration of the roots of one's religious, political, and general thinking. Catholic dogma had stressed the pivotal role of the church fathers in shaping the contours of the Church, but the humanists insisted on reading them for themselves in both the Latin and Greek original texts. Out of this arose the hugely influential role of Augustine of Hippo (354-430), a major fourth century church father, in shaping many of the foundational perspectives of the emerging streams of Protestantism.

Unfortunately, the political ways of thinking did not have the same level of impact upon the Europe of the 1500s. It would be some time later before the democratic ways of doing government from Plato and ancient Greece would make substantial impact upon Europe.⁷¹ The iron clad grip upon civil and daily life that Roman

Latin, they applied the principle of *ad fontes*, or back to the sources, across broad areas of learning, seeking out manuscripts of Patristic literature as well as pagan authors. In 1439, while employed in Naples at the court of Alfonso V of Aragon (at the time engaged in a dispute with the Papal States) the humanist Lorenzo Valla used stylistic textual analysis, now called philology, to prove that the Donation of Constantine, which purported to confer temporal powers on the Pope of Rome, was an 8th-century forgery.^[30] For the next 70 years, however, neither Valla nor any of his contemporaries thought to apply the techniques of philology to other controversial manuscripts in this way. Instead, after the fall of the Byzantine Empire to the Turks in 1453, which brought a flood of Greek Orthodox refugees to Italy, humanist scholars increasingly turned to the study of Neoplatonism and Hermeticism, hoping to bridge the differences between the Greek and Roman Churches, and even between Christianity itself and the non-Christian world.^[31] The refugees brought with them Greek manuscripts, not only of Plato and Aristotle, but also of the Christian Gospels, previously unavailable in the Latin West.

“After 1517, when the new invention of printing made these texts widely available, the Dutch humanist Erasmus, who had studied Greek at the Venetian printing house of Aldus Manutius, began a philological analysis of the Gospels in the spirit of Valla, comparing the Greek originals with their Latin translations with a view to correcting errors and discrepancies in the latter. Erasmus, along with the French humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, began issuing new translations, laying the groundwork for the Protestant Reformation. Henceforth Renaissance humanism, particularly in the German North, became concerned with religion, while Italian and French humanism concentrated increasingly on scholarship and philology addressed to a narrow audience of specialists, studiously avoiding topics that might offend despotic rulers or which might be seen as corrosive of faith. After the Reformation, critical examination of the Bible did not resume until the advent of the so-called Higher criticism of the 19th-century German Tübingen school. [“Humanism,” wikipedia.org]

⁷¹Not until the emergence of the Age of Reason, sometimes referred to as the Enlightenment, in the 1700s does political philosophy undergo radical re-thinking away from a dictatorial system either by the Roman Catholic Church or by region rulers.

Catholicism enjoyed in Europe through the middle ages continued to shape the sense that church and state were to be virtually one entity. Both Protestantism and Catholicism in Europe in the 1500 and 1600s focused mostly on debates over religious confessional dominance across Europe with established governments imposing either Protestant or Catholic systems of belief and governance on the territories under their control. The French Revolution in the 1700s brought more democratic systems of governing to the forefront in Europe.

Thus what Calvin, Luther, Zwingli, Knox et als. advocated in Protestantism was authoritarian government in which both civic and church authority was commonly shared between church and state. The church claimed the authority to impose ‘orthodox’ belief and the state enforced it upon the people.

Calvin's impact on Geneva from the 1540s on, in large degree, depended upon winning a tug of war with the town council over governance of the canton of Geneva. Church leaders devised the official liturgy to be followed by the churches, and the government enforced it with civil penalties for those resisting. His most controversial battle with the town council centered on who determined excommunication and enforced it. His early efforts in the *Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte à Genève* (Articles on the Organization of the Church and its Worship at Geneva) in January of 1537 created a controversy that led to him and Farel being ban from the city by November. But upon his return to Geneva in 1541, the council passed the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on 20 November 1541. This opened the door for shared authority between the church leadership and the town council in complete re-organization of the church and how it was to function in the canton. The next year saw Calvin's revamping of the liturgy in *La Forme des Prières et Chants Ecclésiastiques* (The Form of Prayers and Church Hymns) passed by the council and instituted as the official liturgy of the churches in the canton. Although to North Americans such an intertwining of government and church seems strange and unreal, it was viewed as both biblical and historical in the 1500s. Alternative viewpoints were tolerated in varying degrees by the different Swiss cantons but depended largely upon both the religious and civil leaders' attitudes in each canton.

In the Geneva canton of the middle 1500s, the presence and influence of the libertines -- centered mostly in the aristocratic, wealthy segment -- presented challenges for toleration to Calvin. The affair with Michael Servetus in 1553 where Calvin pushed hard for Servetus' execution as a heretic was a pivotal moment in Geneva. With Calvin prevailing over the city council, the level of toleration of dissent diminished dramatically for

several years afterward. But with Calvin's death in 1564 the town council with a more tolerate attitude began re-asserting control over the city and the canton, as well as church life.⁷²

When seeking to understand the religious views of Calvin and those around him, this cultural background must not be overlooked. Their interpretation of scripture as well as their doctrinal views were shaped against the cultural influences of their world in the sixteenth century.⁷³



Seventeenth through Twentieth Century.

⁷²John Knox would represent the least tolerate of these sixteenth century reformers, although he never fully succeeded in ruling Scotland with the iron fist that he desired. The political dynamics in Scotland were entirely different than in Switzerland, and the three way tug of war between influences from Roman Catholicism, the Church of English, and the Scottish Reformed movement complicated the situation substantially. Added to that was his fiery style that kept controversy brewing almost perpetually. Additionally, also was the nationalistic tensions between the Scots and the English. But where the Scottish Church controlled life, a very rigid approach to government, church, and daily living was implemented.

⁷³Lying even deeper culturally is the emerging scholasticism in the western world. Scholasticism as an advanced method of critical thinking takes on many shapes and forms from the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. The era of Calvin and the Reformers in the sixteenth century was shaped heavily by the then current emphasis on humanism and rediscovery of the ancient world. Emerging out of this atmosphere after Calvin's era is the period of Reformed Scholasticism among those in the Calvinist tradition. In its essence, the religious focus shifted from exegetical based biblical theology to rationalistic and philosophical based theology. This shapes the developing Calvinism as often substantially different from Calvin's own teachings which were much more exegetically based theology.

From the 1600s through the 1900s the impact of Calvin takes many directions and goes into different parts of the world.⁷⁴ The cultural backdrop to this period plays an even greater shaping role in the religious trends of Europe and North America.⁷⁵

First there was the establishment of governmental empires based in Europe but extending themselves into other parts of the world as well. The Early Modern period of European history spans the era roughly from 1500 to 1800.⁷⁶ The emergence of the Ottoman Empire with the fall of Constantinople in 1453 cut off European trade with the East and prompted massive exploration to find alternatives for restoring trade with Asia.⁷⁷ Cul-

⁷⁴"The Reformed faith spread throughout Europe in the 16th century, with different characteristics in different places. Calvinism was the dominant form of Protestantism in France during this time, and after a period of struggle Calvinists were officially tolerated there. Under the leadership of John Knox the Church of Scotland, which was broadly Reformed in character, became the established church in Scotland. In the Netherlands, Calvinism also became the official established religion following a period of persecution. Germany remained predominately Lutheran during the 16th century, but Reformed worship was promoted intermittently by rulers in the Palatinate. Reformed ideas also influenced Protestants in Eastern Europe. The reform of the Church of England was also influenced by Reformed theologians, and remained so throughout the 16th century." ["History of Calvinism," wikipedia.org]

⁷⁵Beyond the rise of Renaissance humanism and colonialism, a third dynamic to be treated under *Academics* below is Reformed Scholasticism, and in some ways perhaps the most influential of the three dynamics shaping Calvinism in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.

⁷⁶"Early modern Europe is the term used by historians to refer to a period in the history of Europe (especially Western Europe and Central Europe) which spanned the centuries between the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, roughly the late 15th century to the late 18th century. The early modern period is often considered to have begun with such events as the beginning of the High Renaissance in Italy; the invention of movable type printing in the 1450s; the Fall of Constantinople in 1453; the end of the Wars of the Roses in 1485; the Voyages of Christopher Columbus and the completion of the *Reconquista* in 1492 or the start of the Protestant Reformation in 1517. Its end point is often linked with the outset of the French Revolution in 1789, or with the more nebulous origins of industrialism in late 18th century Britain. As with most periodizations of history, however, the precise dates chosen vary.

"Some of the more notable events of the early modern period included the Reformation and the religious conflicts it provoked (including the French Wars of Religion and the Thirty Years' War), the European colonization of the Americas and the peak of the European witch-hunt phenomenon."

["Early modern Europe," wikipedia.org]

⁷⁷"The growth of the Ottoman Empire, culminating in the fall of Constantinople in 1453, cut off trading possibilities with the east. Western Europe was forced to discover new trading routes, as happened with Columbus's travel to the Americas in 1492, and Vasco da Gama's circumnavigation of India and Africa in 1498.

"The numerous wars did not prevent European states from exploring and conquering wide portions of the world, from Africa to Asia and the newly discovered Americas. In the 15th century, Por-



turally, there developed the idea of European superiority that religiously motivated most of the newly emerging Protestant groups, along with the Roman Catholic Church, to consider their version of Christianity as far superior to any other, and especially to the non-Christian religions elsewhere in the world.⁷⁸ The by-product of this era of colonialism⁷⁹ was the spread of Protestant-

tugal led the way in geographical exploration along the coast of Africa in search for a maritime route to India, followed by Spain near the close of the 15th century; dividing their exploration of world according to the Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494.^[43] They were the first states to set up colonies in America and trading posts (factories) along the shores of Africa and Asia, establishing the first direct European diplomatic contacts with Southeast Asian states in 1511, China in 1513 and Japan in 1542. In 1552, Russian tsar Ivan the Terrible conquered two major Tatar khanates, Khanate of Kazan and the Astrakhan Khanate, and the Yermak's voyage of 1580 led to the annexation of the Tatar Siberian Khanate into Russia; the Russians would soon after conquer the rest of Siberia. Oceanic explorations were soon followed by France, England and the Netherlands, who explored the Portuguese and Spanish trade routes into the Pacific Ocean, reaching Australia in 1606^[44] and New Zealand in 1642.”

[“The History of Europe,” wikipedia.org]

^{78c}Another development was the idea of ‘European superiority’.

The ideal of civilisation was taken over from the ancient Greeks and Romans: discipline, education and living in the city were required to make people civilised; Europeans and non-Europeans were judged for their civility, and Europe regarded itself as superior to other continents. There was a movement by some such as Montaigne that regarded the non-Europeans as a better, more natural and primitive people. Post services were founded all over Europe, which allowed a humanistic interconnected network of intellectuals across Europe, despite religious divisions. However, the Roman Catholic Church banned many leading scientific works; this led to an intellectual advantage for Protestant countries, where the banning of books was regionally organised. Francis Bacon and other advocates of science tried to create unity in Europe by focusing on the unity in nature.¹ In the 15th century, at the end of the Middle Ages, powerful sovereign states were appearing, built by the New Monarchs who were centralising power in France, England, and Spain. On the other hand the Parliament in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth grew in power, taking legislative rights from the Polish king. The new state power was contested by parliaments in other countries especially England. New kinds of states emerged which were co-operation agreements between territorial rulers, cities, farmer republics and knights.”

[“History of Europe,” wikipedia.org]

^{79c}The European colonial period was the era from the 1500s to the mid-1900s when several European powers (particularly, but not exclusively, Portugal, Spain, Britain, the Netherlands and France) established colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. At first the countries followed mercantilist policies designed to strengthen the home economy at the expense of rivals, so the colonies were usual-

ism, including the Reformed Church tradition, to other parts of the world. Although early on this expansionism was done by the Portuguese and the Spanish, eventually England, France, and the Dutch Republic established their empires in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and this gave Protestantism the impetus to spread rapidly.⁸⁰ The wedding of church and state that gave a sense of legitimacy to ‘forced conversions’ to a particular brand of Christianity played a significant role here.⁸¹ Thus the ‘conversion of the heathen’ to Chris-

ly allowed to trade only with the mother country. By the mid-19th century, however, the powerful British Empire gave up mercantilism and trade restrictions and introduced the principle of free trade, with few restrictions or tariffs.” [“Colonialism,” wikipedia.org]

^{80c}European colonialism, or imperialism, began in the 15th century with the ‘Age of Discovery’, led by Portuguese and Spanish exploration of the Americas, and the coasts of Africa, the Middle East, India, and East Asia. During the 16th and 17th centuries, England, France and the Dutch Republic established their own overseas empires, in direct competition with each other. The end of the 18th and early 19th century saw the first era of decolonization, when most of the European colonies in the Americas gained their independence from their respective metropolises. Spain was irreversibly weakened after the loss of their New World colonies, but the Kingdom of Great Britain (uniting Scotland with England and Wales), France, Portugal, and the Dutch turned their attention to the Old World, particularly South Africa, India, and South East Asia, where coastal enclaves had already been established. The industrialization of the 19th century led to what has been termed the era of New Imperialism, when the pace of colonization rapidly accelerated, the height of which was the Scramble for Africa, in which Belgium was a major and Germany a lesser participant. During the 20th century, the overseas colonies of the losers of World War I were distributed amongst the victors as mandates, but it was not until the end of World War II that the second phase of decolonization began in earnest. In 1999, Portugal gave up the last of Europe’s colonies in Asia, Macau, to China, ending an era that had lasted six hundred years.” [“History of Colonialism,” wikipedia.org]

^{81c}Colonialism held the idea of bringing western civilization to the uncivilized. Stephen Neill, writing the first extensive study of colonialism from a missiological viewpoint, suggests that all the West has done tends to be interpreted in terms of aggression (1966:12). That aggression encompasses political, economic, social, intellectual and the most dangerous of all forms of aggression missions (Neill, 19 66:12). Neill points out that the colonial idea is used almost exclusively as a term of reproach with the notion of European exploitation and impoverishment of cultural others who are normally considered weak and inferior. However, colonialism was not an idea birthed at the beginning of the modern mission era.

“Constantine’s conversion to Christianity in 312 AD wed the church with the state and set the framework for later colonialism. Without a doubt St. Augustine’s *bellum iustum* legitimized the Christian states use of force to bring the heretic and later the heathen in subjection to the church (Grunder, 1995:18-19). The predisposition of mission-minded Christians to the church-state paradigm advanced the Western political and religious agenda across the world. Neill posits that colonialism’s roots lie in ancient Greek civilization and today we rarely, if ever, talk about Islamic colonialism or Russian colonialism. According to Neill, the term is almost exclusively used for the time period of European expansion begin-

tianity was often done by force rather than by persuasion. Both the Reformed tradition coming mostly out of the Netherlands and the Presbyterian tradition coming mainly out of Scotland are included in this pattern. This centered not just in the new colonies of North America but extended elsewhere that both the Dutch and British expanded their empires especially into Africa and Asia. Calvinism's spread was carried along on the wings of colonialism, as is true of all other branches of Protestantism during this era.

Second there came the Age of Reason beginning in the late seventeenth century.⁸² Its roots reach to philosophers from 1650 to 1700 who, weary of the religious wars over Europe, developed critical stances toward religion of every strip.⁸³ Across Europe varia-

ning with Vasco da Gama (1966:11-34).

"Others have summarized colonialism with the three Cs: Christianity, commerce and civilization. David Bosch suggested that mission was equated with colonialism from the 16th century onward. In fact, whether knowingly or not, missionaries were pioneers of western colonial expansion (Bosch, 1991:303-305). Mission societies had a dual mandate, one to evangelize and one to civilize (Jacobs, 1993:237); and up until the 19th century to become Christian meant to become civil (Hiebert, 1994:76). In essence, colonialism rejected the need of using traditional cultural forms for its belief in the superiority of the western Christian civilization. Through the extension of the gospel missionaries believed that pagan culture would become both Christian and modern (Hiebert, 1994:77)."

["Global Missiology English, Vol. 2, No 2 (2005)," GLOBALMISSIOLOGY.ORG]

⁸²"The Age of Enlightenment (or simply the Enlightenment or Age of Reason) was a cultural movement of intellectuals beginning in the late 17th and 18th century Europe emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition.^[1] Its purpose was to reform society using reason, challenge ideas grounded in tradition and faith, and advance knowledge through the scientific method. It promoted scientific thought, skepticism, and intellectual interchange^[2] It opposed superstition and intolerance, with the Catholic Church a favorite target. Some Enlightenment philosophers collaborated with Enlightened despots, who were absolute rulers who tried out some of the new governmental ideas in practice. The ideas of the Enlightenment have had a long-term major impact on the culture, politics, and governments of the Western world."

["Age of Enlightenment," wikipedia.org]

⁸³"Originating about 1650 to 1700, it was sparked by philosophers Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677), John Locke (1632–1704), Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), Voltaire (1694–1778) and physicist Isaac Newton (1643–1727).^[3] Ruling princes often endorsed and fostered these figures and even attempted to apply their ideas of government in what was known as enlightened absolutism. The Scientific Revolution is closely tied to the Enlightenment, as its discoveries overturned many traditional concepts and introduced new perspectives on nature and man's place within it. The Enlightenment flourished until about 1790–1800, after which the emphasis on reason gave way to Romanticism's emphasis on emotion, and a Counter-Enlightenment gained force.^[4]

"In France, Enlightenment was based in the salons and culminated in the great *Encyclopédie* (1751–72) edited by Denis Diderot (1713–1784) and (until 1759) Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717–1783) with contributions by hundreds of leading philosophes (intellectuals) such as Voltaire (1694–1778), Rousseau (1712–1778) [5] and Montesquieu (1689–1755). Some 25,000 copies of the 35

tions of the approach to reason, science, art etc. surface and helped give distinctive nationalistic shape to the religious perspectives of Calvinism, Lutheranism, Catholicism etc.⁸⁴ Included also is the tendency toward

volume set were sold, half of them outside France. The new intellectual forces spread to urban centres across Europe, notably England, Scotland, the German states, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Italy, Austria, and Spain, then jumped the Atlantic into the European colonies, where it influenced Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, among many others, and played a major role in the American Revolution. The political ideals of the Enlightenment influenced the American Declaration of Independence, the United States Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the Polish–Lithuanian Constitution of May 3, 1791.^[6]" ["Age of Enlightenment," wikipedia.org]

⁸⁴"Dutch Republic

"For the Dutch the Enlightenment initially sprouted during the Dutch Golden Age. Developments during this period were to have a profound influence in the shaping of western civilization, as science, art, philosophy and economic development flourished in the Dutch Republic. Some key players in the Dutch Enlightenment were: Baruch Spinoza, a philosopher who played a major role in shaping the basis for the Enlightenment; Pierre Bayle, a French philosopher who advocated separation between science and religion; Eise Eisinga, an astronomer who built a planetarium; Lodewijk Meyer, a radical who claimed the Bible was obscure and doubtful; Adriaan Koerbagh, a scholar and critic of religion and conventional morality; and Burchard de Volder, a natural philosopher. . . .

"Prussia and the German States

"By the mid-18th century the German Enlightenment in music, philosophy, science and literature emerged as an intellectual force. Frederick the Great (1712–86), the king of Prussia 1740–1786, saw himself as a leader of the Enlightenment and patronized philosophers and scientists at his court in Berlin. He was an enthusiast for French ideas as he ridiculed German culture and was unaware of the remarkable advances it was undergoing. Voltaire, who had been imprisoned and maltreated by the French government, was eager to accept Frederick's invitation to live at his palace. Frederick explained, "My principal occupation is to combat ignorance and prejudice... to enlighten minds, cultivate morality, and to make people as happy as it suits human nature, and as the means at my disposal permit."^[33] Other rulers were supportive, such as Karl Friedrich, Grand Duke of Baden, who ruled Baden for 73 years (1713–1811).^[34]

"Weimar's Courtyard of the Muses demonstrates the importance of Weimar. Schiller is reading; on the far left (seated) Wieland and Herder, Goethe standing on the right in front of the pillar. 1860 painting by Theobald von Oer.

"Christian Wolff (1679–1754) was the pioneer as a writer who expounded the Enlightenment to German readers; he legitimized German as a philosophic language.^[35] Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803) broke new ground in philosophy and poetry, specifically in the Sturm und Drang movement of proto-Romanticism. Weimar Classicism ("Weimarer Klassik") was a cultural and literary movement based in Weimar that sought to establish a new humanism by synthesizing Romantic, classical and Enlightenment ideas. The movement, from 1772 until 1805, involved Herder as well as polymath Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) and Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805), a poet and historian. Herder argued that every folk had its own particular identity, which was expressed in its language and culture. This legitimized the promotion of German language and culture and helped shape the development of German nationalism. Schiller's plays expressed the restless spirit



divisiveness being encouraged and in some instances coming to dominate religious discussions.

Geographically, the southward expansion of

of his generation, depicting the hero's struggle against social pressures and the force of destiny.^[36]

“German music, sponsored by the upper classes, came of age under composers Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791).^[37]

“In remote Königsberg philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) tried to reconcile rationalism and religious belief, individual freedom and political authority. Kant's work contained basic tensions that would continue to shape German thought – and indeed all of European philosophy – well into the 20th century.^[38]

“The German Enlightenment won the support of princes, aristocrats and the middle classes and permanently reshaped the culture.^[39] . . .

“Scotland

“One leader of the Scottish Enlightenment was Adam Smith, the father of modern economic science.

“In the 18th-century, influential thinkers as Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith and David Hume, paved the way for the modernization of Scotland and the entire Atlantic world.^[44] Hutcheson, the father of the Scottish Enlightenment, championed political liberty and the right of popular rebellion against tyranny. Smith, in his monumental *Wealth of Nations* (1776), advocated liberty in the sphere of commerce and the global economy. Hume developed philosophical concepts that directly influenced James Madison and thus the U.S. Constitution. In 19th-century Britain, the Scottish Enlightenment, as popularized by Dugald Stewart, became the basis of classical liberalism.^[45]

“Scientific progress was influenced by, amongst others, the geologist James Hutton, physicist and engineer Lord Kelvin, and James Watt engineer and inventor of the steam engine.^[46] . . .

“Thirteen Colonies

“The Americans closely followed English and Scottish political ideas, as well as some French thinkers such as Montesquieu.^{[51][52]} During the Enlightenment there was a great emphasis upon liberty, democracy, republicanism and religious tolerance. Attempts to reconcile science and religion resulted in a widespread rejection of prophecy, miracle and revealed religion in preference for Deism - especially by Thomas Paine in “The Age of Reason” and by Thomas Jefferson in his short Jefferson Bible - from which all supernatural aspects were removed.

“Benjamin Franklin was influential in America, England, Scotland,^[53] and France, for his political activism and for his advances in physics.^[54]”

[“Age of Enlightenment,” wikipedia.org]

the teaching of the Reformed tradition moved into **France** during Calvin's life and through his influence. In the 1500s, the Huguenots were the primary target of Catholic persecution. In spite of this, their numbers grew dramatically between 1555 and 1561 reaching an estimated two million membership by 1562, and was helped by the Reform movement in Switzerland particularly from Geneva and Calvin where French refugees were especially influential. The impact of the Reformed tradition on this group of Christians in France, which pre-dated the beginning of the Reformed Church in Europe, became substantial with the teachings of Calvin now playing a major role in reshaping their thinking about doctrine and church practice. Their appeal to French noblemen and others in places of high influence in French society at first gained them greater freedom to practice their beliefs and also to level criticisms at the Catholic Church. Brief persecution against them flared in the late 1550s from King Francis II encouraged by his wife later better known as Mary Queen of Scots. Her return to Scotland in 1561 opened the door for the Edict of Orléans ending persecution of the Huguenots and then the Edict of Saint-Germain in January 1562 formally recognized the Huguenots as a legal religious group in France.

The late 1500s were characterized by periods of peace -- and Huguenot growth -- and war between them and the Catholic Church. The infamous Religious Wars in France⁸⁵ left France in turmoil over religion. The Edict of Nantes issued by Henry IV on April 13, 1598 granted substantial legal rights to the Huguenots in large part by drawing a line of division between civic rights and religious rights. This remained in place until October 1685 when revoked by Louis XIV. This triggered a massive

⁸⁵“The French Wars of Religion (1562–98) is the name of a period of civil fighting and military operations, primarily fought between French Catholics and Protestants (Huguenots). The conflict involved the factional disputes between the aristocratic houses of France, such as the House of Bourbon and House of Guise (Lorraine), and both sides received assistance from foreign sources.

“The exact number of wars and their respective dates are the subject of continued debate by historians; some assert that the Edict of Nantes in 1598 concluded the wars, although a resurgence of rebellious activity following this leads some to believe the Peace of Alais in 1629 is the actual conclusion. However, the Massacre of Vassy in 1562 is agreed to begin the Wars of Religion and the Edict of Nantes at least ended this series of conflicts. During this time, complex diplomatic negotiations and agreements of peace were followed by renewed conflict and power struggles.

“At the conclusion of the conflict in 1598, Huguenots were granted substantial rights and freedoms by the Edict of Nantes, though it did not end hostility towards them. The wars weakened the authority of the monarchy, already fragile under the rule of Francis II and then Charles IX, though it later reaffirmed its role under Henry IV.”

[“French Wars of Religion,” wikipedia.org]

migration of Huguenots into other European countries more sympathetic to the Protestant Christian cause with as many as one million refugees fleeing France.

The end of the 1600s and through the 1700s brought significant decline in the numbers of Huguenots and French Protestants generally with the flaring up of religious persecution. Louis XIV renounced the Edit of Nantes in 1685 and not until the Edict of Versailles (= Edict of Tolerance) on Nov. 7, 1787 by Louis XVI was it possible to practice a Protestant faith tradition legally in France. With the end of the French monarchy, known as le Ancien Régime, in 1788, the full impact of religious tolerance for non-Catholics began taking hold in France. But by the end of the 1600s not many French Protestants were left in the country after the mass migration to other European countries, North America, and a few other places with the revocation of the Edit of Nantes in 1685.

For the past two plus centuries Protestants in France have amounted to only a very small percentage of the population there. Today the Huguenots number only a million that represent less than two percentage points of the population.⁸⁶ Additionally several other much smaller groups have gained legal recognition and are linked in some way with the Reformed tradition.⁸⁷ After WWII, French Protestantism branched out into a highly diverse group of non-Catholic Christian groups, particularly with heavy influence from Protestant groups from the US in missionary efforts. Yet, Protestantism in general still today makes up only a very small portion of the French population, adding almost a million members totally to that of the Huguenot church in France.⁸⁸

The spread northward into **Germany** by the Reformed tradition was much more limited. The presence of both Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism in the German states of central Europe served to block major inroads by the Reformed tradition, although

⁸⁶“The Huguenots of the Reformed Church of France emerged from the teachings of John Calvin, and became the major Protestant sect in France until a large portion of the population died in massacres or were deported from French territory following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. The group survived until the end of the monarchy and the restoration of full citizenship for Huguenots by the French Revolutionaries. Today, the Huguenots number about one million, or about two percent of the population; They are most concentrated in southeastern France and the Cévennes region in the south. The Calvinist congregations in Alsace and Moselle are organised as the Protestant Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine (EPRAL).” [“Protestantism in France,” wikipedia.org]

⁸⁷These include:

Reformed Church of France (ERF, Église réformée de France)
Église protestante réformée d’Alsace et de Lorraine (EPRAL)
Union nationale des églises protestantes réformées évangéliques de France (UNEPREF, formerly EREI)

⁸⁸For example the Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France, the largest group of French Baptists, listed in 2011 with the European Baptist Federation some 6,519 members in 119 churches.

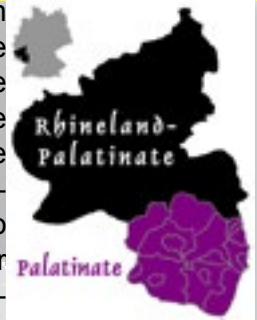
some impact in the Palatine region was made.⁸⁹ The decades of the late 1500s through the 1600s were characterized by intense violence and turbulence in central Europe at the various city states as regional rulers attempted to sort out who was to be Catholic, or Lutheran, or to a lesser degree Reformed. Usually that decision was solely made by the ruling prince and which ever direction he went everyone in his territory was forced to comply or move elsewhere. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 carved out the German city states into either Lutheran or Catholic territories, but did not really solve the religious tensions and chaos successfully. Uniformly the official religion of each territory -- Lutheran or Catholic -- constituted the state church (in German the Landeskirche⁹⁰) and tended to exclude the existence

⁸⁹“Calvinism got a support in Germany in 1604 when Landgrave Maurice of Hesse-Kassel converted from Lutheranism. Unfortunately, his conversion prompted serious backlash against the Calvinists from the predominately Lutheran population in Hesse.^[53] In 1613, the Calvinists gained another prominent convert, John Sigismund, Elector of Brandenburg. Eventually, Brandenburg would become a bi-confessional state, allowing for both Lutheranism and Calvinism, and the Electors of Brandenburg often advocated for their persecuted Calvinist brethren.

“In 1618, the Thirty Years’ War broke out, leading to a tumultuous time for the German Reformed. Invading Roman Catholics besieged Heidelberg in 1622, severely damaging the city and persecuting many Reformed believers. Five years later, in 1627, Maximilian I of Bavaria demanded the citizens of Heidelberg to convert to Roman Catholicism, yet they refused to do so, saying that they would rather forfeit their property than give up their Reformed faith. For decades following the end of the war, the Reformed enjoyed peace and stability. The Peace of Prague in 1635 had guaranteed legal recognition and protection for the Reformed. However, in 1685 the Calvinist, and childless, Charles II, Elector Palatine died, and was succeeded by the Catholic Philip William. Three years later, a dispute over the who was the legitimate ruler of the Palatinate prompted King Louis XVI of France to invade, leading to a wave of persecution of Protestants and the destruction of the city of Heidelberg. The Treaty of Ryswick put an end to violent persecution, yet, subsequent leaders put further pressure on the German Reformed.”

[“History of Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

⁹⁰“In the pre-Reformation era, the organization of the church within a land was understood as a landeskirche, certainly under a higher power (the pope or a patriarch), but also possessing an increased measure of independence, especially as concerning its internal structure and its relations to its king, prince or ruler. Unlike in Scandinavia and England, the bishops in the national churches did not survive the Reformation, making it impossible for a conventional diocesan system to continue within Lutheranism. Therefore Martin Luther demanded that, as a stop-gap, each secular Landesherr (territorial lord, monarch or a body, like the governments of republican Imperial estates, such as Free Imperial Cities or Swiss cantons) should exercise episcopal functions in the respective territories. The principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* also





Synod of Dort in 1618-1619 at Dordrecht

is remembered for controversy when in 1618 the Dutch pastor and theologian Jacobus Arminius was expelled from the church at the Second Synod of Dort. The first synod⁹⁶ was in 1578 at Dordrecht in the then Dutch Republic (Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Provinciën).⁹⁷ At

merger, and subsequently formed the Restored Reformed Church (Hersteld Hervormde Kerk, HHK) in the Netherlands. Some free churches have since affiliated with the HHK and the group is experiencing growth across the country with 118 congregations and 58,517 members in 2011.

⁹⁶“The Dutch Republic — officially known as the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands (Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden), the Republic of the United Netherlands, or the Republic of the Seven United Provinces (Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Provinciën) — was a republic in Europe existing from 1581, when part of the Netherlands separated from Spanish rule, to 1795. It preceded the Batavian Republic, the United Kingdom of the Netherlands and ultimately the modern Kingdom of the Netherlands. Alternative names include the United Provinces (Verenigde Provinciën), Federated Dutch Provinces (Foederatae Belgii Provinciae), and Dutch Federation (Belgica Foederata).” [“Dutch Republic,” wikipedia.org]

⁹⁷One must remember the political turmoil taking place in the Netherlands from 1566/1568 to 1648 with the revolt of the seven northern provinces of the Low Countries against the Roman Catholic Church. Labeled the Dutch Revolt, this era was characterized by warfare between Catholics and Protestants. Initially led by William of Orange the revolt resulted in the formation of the Dutch republic, called the United Provinces. King Philip managed to suppress the rebellion but in 1572 the northern provinces broke away successfully by 1581 and finally legally recognized as such in 1648. The southern provinces, however, (situated in modern-day Belgium, Luxembourg, northern France and southern Netherlands) remained under Spanish rule, and thus Roman Catholic. The heavy handedness of the Hapsburg rulers pushed many of the wealthy and highly educated people north into the Protestant territory and aided their success. By the end of the Thirty-Years War in 1648, however, significant chunks of the southern provinces had been lost to France, due to the manipulative work of both Cardinal Richelieu and Louis XIII of France.

The gaining of *de jure* recognition at the end of the Thirty-Years War in 1648 allowed the Dutch Republic to build the Dutch Empire lasting until the middle of the twentieth century. The colonizing efforts of the Dutch played the major role in the missionary efforts of the Dutch Reformed Church in spreading the Reformed tradition

the first synod, the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism were adopted as the official teachings of the NHK. These two along with the Canons of Dort, adopted at the second Synod of Dort, form the three foundations of unity in the Reformed churches.⁹⁸

Maintaining unity proved to be challenging among the Calvinists in the Netherlands. Until the demise of the Dutch Republic in 1795, the Dutch Reformed Church enjoyed ‘privileged’ status meaning not that it was the official church of the republic but rather, among the many perks, that every government official had to be a member of this church. And this gave these officials legal permission to keep their businesses open on Sunday while everyone else had to close up shop.

The next two centuries -- 1600s and 1700s -- are known as the age of the Dutch Nadere Reformatie (appx. 1600 to 1750).⁹⁹ And they produced division and splits among the Reformed churches. The aim was to more strictly enforce Reform belief and practice into Dutch life.¹⁰⁰ Given developing trends in thinking and philosophy going opposite directions through this period and into the 1800s across Europe, such tensions inside a church seeking to rigidly enforce itself on to the daily life of the people are easy to understand. The first major split happened in 1834 with some 120 congregations leaving the Dutch Reformed Church.¹⁰¹ Another

to other parts of the world under the control of the Dutch.

⁹⁸“The Three Forms of Unity is a collective name for the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Heidelberg Catechism, which reflect the doctrinal concerns of Continental Calvinism and are accepted as official statements of doctrine by many of the Reformed churches.” [“Three Forms of Unity,” wikipedia.org]

⁹⁹“Nadere Reformatie is a Dutch term that refers to a period of church history in the Netherlands, following the Reformation, from roughly 1600 until 1750. The term is most often translated into English as either ‘Dutch Second Reformation’ or ‘Further Reformation,’ with the latter translation being preferred.” [“Nadere Reformatie,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁰⁰“In broad terms, the period and its representatives are known for their desire to apply the principles of the Reformation to their day – their homes, churches, and, indeed, all sectors of Dutch society in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In their balance and value of both orthodoxy as well as piety, the Nadere Reformatie resembles English Puritanism, and German Pietism. In fact, Puritanism had much influence on the Nadere Reformatie. Many Puritan works were translated into Dutch during this time.

“The two leading figures of the period are a professor, Gisbertus Voetius, and a pastor, Wilhelmus a Brakel. Brakel’s main work, the *Redelijke Godsdienst*, an explanation, defense, and application of the Reformed faith, has been translated into English”

[“Nadere Reformatie,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁰¹“In 1834, the minister Hendrik de Cock of the town of Ulrum was told by church leaders that he could not preach against certain colleagues, whom he believed held erroneous views. He and his congregation seceded from the Dutch Reformed Church. In time, the Afscheiding (the Separation) led to the departure of 120 congregations from the Dutch Reformed Church.” [“Dutch Reformed Church,” wikipedia.org] The federation of churches involved in this

major split, the Doleantie, took place in 1886 led by a businessman and also the theologian Abraham Kuyper, with the Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland, CGKN) being formed.¹⁰² But through periodic mergers among the growing number of Reformed oriented churches in the Netherlands, these groups today have new identities in other groups.¹⁰³ One of the by-products of this divisiveness in the Netherlands has been the transporting of a similar attitude to North America among the numer-

ous Reformed oriented groups there.¹⁰⁴

split came to be known as the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken (CGK) which continues to exist until today.

An offshoot of this is the Free Reformed Churches in North America. But this North American group today is affiliated with the Christian Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken, CGKN).

¹⁰²“The original name of the church was Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands (Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland, CGKN). The church was formed in 1869 by the merger of two churches, the Reformed churches under the cross and the separated Christian congregations, both separated from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1834. Most of the CGKN merged into the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands in 1892; a small part remained independent, and carried this name until it was renamed in 1947 to Christian Reformed Churches. At the first Synod 8 congregations were represented. A Theological Seminary was opened in The Hague and later was moved to Apeldoorn in 1919. Since then the churches grew steadily till 1985, when membership was 75,000, and today membership fluctuates around this number. It has 11 Classes. The church withdrew from the Reformed Ecumenical Council in 1989, and joined the International Conference of Reformed Churches in 1995.^{[1][2]}” [“Christian Reformed Churches,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁰³One of the very conservative groups is the Restored Reformed Church (Hersteld Hervormde Kerk, HHK), formed in 2004 from a small group inside Dutch Reformed Church. A protest action against the merger of the Dutch Reformed Church into the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, this group cooperates in their youth program with the Christian Reformed Church, but maintains a separate identity. One of the distinguishing traits of this group is the exclusive use of the Statenvertaling translation of the Bible. Almost all the congregations are in the Dutch Bible Belt. Staphorst, Oudorp, Lunteren, Katwijk, Urk, Elspeet, Doornspijk and Opheusden are towns where large Restored Reformed churches can be found.

If this is not sufficiently confusing, there also exists splinter groups with very similar names and more intense conservatism:

The Reformed Churches (Restored) (Dutch: Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (hersteld)), also known as the New Reformed Churches (Dutch: Nieuwe Vrijgemaakte Kerken) constitute a Christian denomination in the Netherlands. It separated from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) in 2003. Officially named the “Reformed Churches in the Netherlands”, they are usually called the “Reformed Churches (Restored)” to avoid confusion with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN).

In the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) or GKV has always been a group that believed that the Liberated Reformed church is the only true denomination. In 1985 a document was released, which stated that the GKV is the only true church. In 2003 in the GKV a group become dissatisfied, and separated from the GKV, because of the Synod decision on divorce and Sunday rest.”

[“Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Restored),” wikipedia.org]

The spread of the Reformed tradition to the **British Isles**, mainly Scotland, took on different contours. The so-called “Scottish Reformation” is dated 1560.¹⁰⁵ This is when the parliament repudiated the control of the pope over the churches in Scotland and officially re-constituted its churches along the lines of the Reformed Church tradition. These parameters were stated in the Scots Confession based on Calvin’s Confession and drawn up by John Knox and adopted in 1560 by the Scottish parliament. But the parliament did not adopt Knox’s excessively rigid Book of Discipline in its first writing in 1560, but in 1578 a second version of it was passed by the parliament. More details of the beginnings of the Reformed tradition in Scotland are narrated above in the survey of John Knox.

In **England** the influence of the Reformed tradition had more difficulty gaining a foothold. Among the laity in the Church of England the English translation, called the Geneva Bible, played an increasingly greater influential role in the second half of the 1500s and the 1600s. It contained the study notes based on Calvin’s interpretation of scripture that helped shape the

¹⁰⁴“The Dutch Reformed Church went with migrants to the Americas, beginning in 1628 in New Amsterdam. St. Thomas Reformed Church was formed in 1660 in St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, and was the first Dutch Reformed Church in the Caribbean. During the period of Dutch settlement in Brazil, colonists organized the Reformed Church in Pernambuco.

“In Canada and the United States, the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) is the largest among the several churches with Dutch Reformed heritage. The next largest is the Reformed Church in America (RCA). Smaller related denominations and federations are the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC), the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC), the Netherlands Reformed Congregations (NRC), the Protestant Reformed Churches in America (PRC), and the United Reformed Churches in North America (URC). Former US Presidents Martin Van Buren and Theodore Roosevelt, both of Dutch descent, were affiliated with the Dutch Reformed Church”

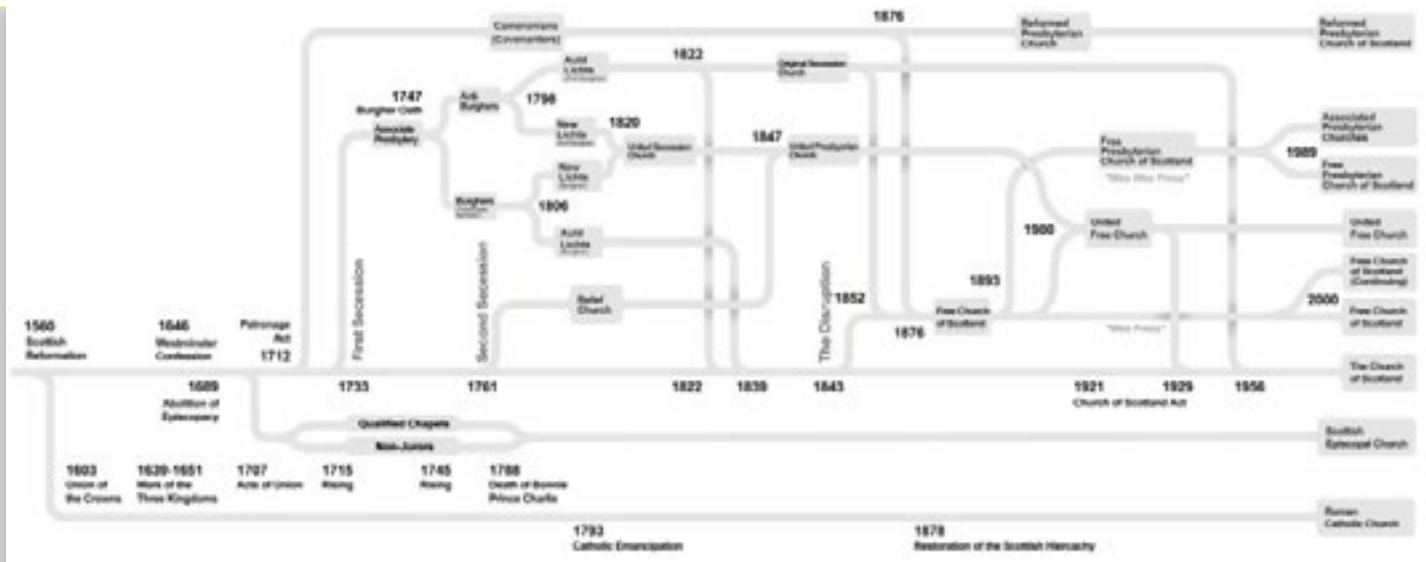
[“Dutch Reformed Church,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁰⁵“The Scottish Reformation was Scotland’s formal break with the Papacy in 1560, and the events surrounding this. It was part of the wider European Protestant Reformation; and in Scotland’s case culminated ecclesiastically in the re-establishment of the church along Reformed lines, and politically in the triumph of English influence over that of the Kingdom of France.

“The Reformation Parliament of 1560, which repudiated the pope’s authority, forbade the celebration of the Mass and approved a Confession of Faith, was made possible by a revolution against French hegemony. Prior to that, Scotland was under the regime of the regent Mary of Guise, who had governed in the name of her absent daughter Mary, Queen of Scots (then also Queen (consort) of France).

“The Scottish Reformation decisively shaped the Church of Scotland^[1] and, through it, all other Presbyterian churches worldwide”

[“Scottish Reformation,” wikipedia.org]



thinking of a large percentage of the non clergy, and even many of the clergy in the smaller rural parishes across England. The King James translation in the early 1600s found great resistance for half a century to wide spread acceptance in England because it was intended to counter the influence of the Geneva Bible. Among the government and church leaders, the influence of Calvin went back and forth. The culmination of this in many ways is traceable with the adoption of the Thirty-Nine Articles in 1563 that pulled back from much of the teaching of Calvin in favor of distinctively Anglican views of belief and church polity. Finalized in 1571, much of the teaching in this document was incorporated into the Book of Common Prayer that shapes Anglican Church practice substantially still today.

The Reformed tradition in **Ireland**, usually labelled the Presbyterian tradition, began in 1610 at Ulster with the migration of a large number of Scottish Presbyterians to Ulster during the reign of James I of England (= James VI of Scotland).¹⁰⁶ By 1642, the Presbytery of Ulster was formed and signalled a break with the Church of Ireland, which was more Anglican in orientation. Out of this emerges the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), that remains the largest group Presbyterian group in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland today with some 300,000 members in 540

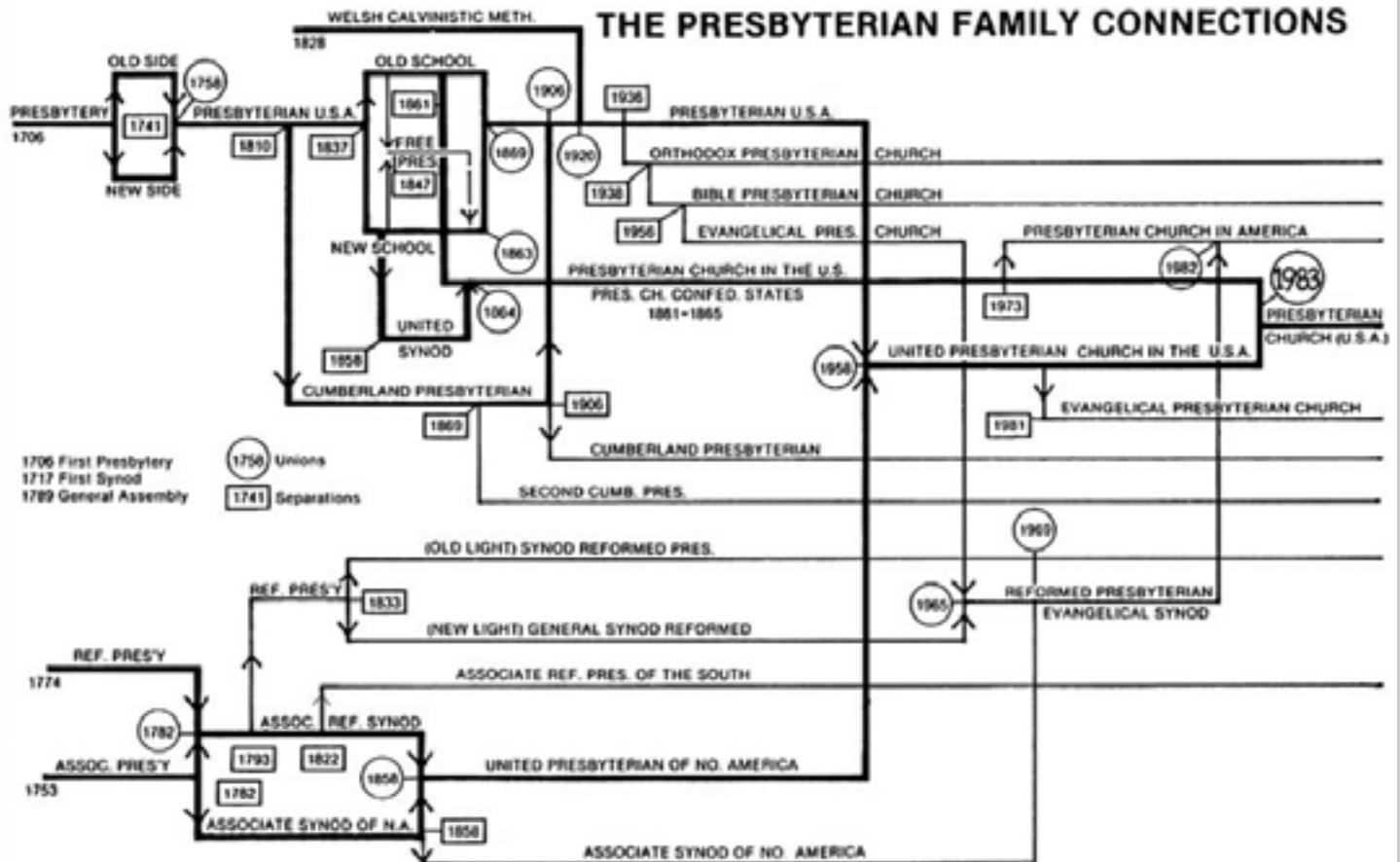
¹⁰⁶“The Plantation of Ulster (Irish: Plandáil Uladh; Ulster-Scots: Plantin o Ulstèr)^[1] was the organised colonisation (plantation) of Ulster – a province of Ireland – by people from Britain during the rule of King James I. Most of the colonists came from Scotland and England. Small private plantation by wealthy landowners began in 1606,^[2] while official plantation sponsored by the British Crown began in 1609. An estimated half a million acres (2,000 km²) spanning counties Tyrconnell, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Cavan, Coleraine and Armagh,^[3] was confiscated from Gaelic chiefs, most of whom had fled Ireland in the 1607 Flight of the Earls. Most of counties Antrim and Down were privately colonised.^[2] Colonising Ulster with loyal settlers was seen as a way to prevent further rebellion, as it had been the region most resistant to English control during the preceding century.” [“Plantation of Ulster,” wikipedia.org]

congregations divided into 19 presbyteries. But as the above chart illustrates, various splits over time have resulted in additional Presbyterian groups in Ireland as well. A mixture of nationalism and a difference of views over beliefs and especially over governance have driven these splits.

In the era after John Knox in **Scotland**, the Reformed tradition took on the distinctive label of Presbyterianism. This name came out of the governance of the church rather than from creedal belief.¹⁰⁷ But church labels gradually diversify over time, and thus in Scotland today you will find a wide diversity of church labels for the Calvinistic tradition in the country. The official Church of Scotland remains Presbyterian in belief and governance since the Golden Act of 1592, although over the centuries between then and now the influence of the Church of England with episcopal governance structures has made inroads at times, and been eliminated at other times. Central to this debate has been

¹⁰⁷“While the Church of Scotland traces its roots back to the earliest Christians in Scotland, its identity was principally shaped by the Scottish Reformation of 1560. At that point, the church in Scotland broke with Rome, in a process of Protestant reform led, among others, by John Knox. It reformed its doctrines and government, drawing on the principles of John Calvin which Knox had been exposed to while living in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1560, the Scottish Parliament abolished papal jurisdiction and approved Calvin’s Confession of Faith, but did not accept many of the principles laid out in Knox’s First Book of Discipline, which argued, among other things, that all of the assets of the old church should pass to the new. The 1560 Reformation Settlement was not ratified by the crown for some years, and the question of church government also remained unresolved. In 1572 the acts of 1560 were finally approved by the young James VI, but the Concordat of Leith also allowed the crown to appoint bishops with the church’s approval. John Knox himself had no clear views on the office of bishop, preferring to see them renamed as ‘superintendents’; but in response to the new Concordat a Presbyterian party emerged headed by Andrew Melville, the author of the Second Book of Discipline.” [“Church of Scotland,” wikipedia.org]

THE PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS



over whether or not to have bishops. The Anglican influence has pushed for them in a pattern similar to the Church of England, while the purists among the Reformed tradition have resisted this, since Calvin did not promote bishops in the Swiss Reformed tradition. John Knox did not object heavily to the idea of bishops, but insisted on them being called ‘superintendents’ rather than bishops.

These intrusions from England have produced splits, along with continued tensions between governing authority by church leaders that is opposed by government leaders who insist on the right to appoint ministers, control church property etc.¹⁰⁸ The consequence of this continuing tension is the wide diversity of Presbyterian and Reformed Church denominations that now exist in Scotland.¹⁰⁹ The Church of Scotland itself

¹⁰⁸“Controversy still surrounded the relationship between the Church of Scotland’s independence and the civil law of Scotland. The interference of civil courts with Church decisions, particularly over the right to appoint ministers, led to a number of groups seceding. This began with the secession of 1733 and culminated in the Disruption of 1843, when a large portion of the Church broke away to form the Free Church of Scotland. The seceding groups tended to divide and reunite among themselves – leading to a proliferation of Presbyterian denominations in Scotland.” [“Church of Scotland,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁰⁹“The Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the Acts of Union 1707 between Scotland and England guaranteed the Church of Scotland’s form of government. However, legislation by the United Kingdom parliament allowing patronage led to splits in the Church.

consequently now is made up of barely over 42% of the population of Scotland. It functions as the national church of Scotland, but does not possess state church status or privileges, as does the Church of England in Britain.

In the **United States**, the Reformed tradition comes in two fundamental varieties: those with Dutch Reformed tradition and those with Scottish Presbyterian tradition.¹¹⁰ Of course, blending of these two streams In 1733, a group of ministers seceded from the Church of Scotland to form the Associate Presbytery, another group seceded in 1761 to form the Relief Church and the Disruption of 1843 led to the formation of the Free Church of Scotland. Further splits took place, especially over theological issues, but most Presbyterians in Scotland were reunited by 1929 union of the established Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland.

“The Presbyterian denominations in Scotland today are the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the United Free Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Associated Presbyterian Church (Associated Presbyterian Churches), and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

“Within Scotland the term kirk is usually used to refer to a local Presbyterian church. Informally the term ‘The Kirk’ refers to the Church of Scotland.”

[“Presbyterianism,” wikipedia.org]

¹¹⁰“Presbyterianism first officially arrived in Colonial America in 1703 with the establishment of the first Presbytery in Philadelphia. In time, the presbytery would be joined by two more to form a synod (1717) and would eventually evolve into the Presbyterian

also takes place historically so that the issue often is not an either / or choice of heritage but rather which stream dominates the individual group. And this perspective does not factor into the mixture the ideological impact of Calvinism in the post Calvin meaning of the term upon numerous additional denominational groups such as Baptists etc.

First, some assessment of those groups with historical roots in the Reform tradition broadly defined needs to be given. And then an overview assessment of the ideological impact of Calvinism upon those groups without a historical link back to Geneva and Calvin needs to follow.

In North America, doctrinal differences that emerged over time have played a larger role in the divisiveness of the Reformed tradition.¹¹¹ Gradually, the initial distinctions reflecting roots either in Holland or Scotland diminished to a point where the labels Reformed or Presbyterian lost much of their distinction from one another. But there still remains both the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America -- the largest branch of Presbyterianism -- and the Christian Reformed Church in North America -- the largest of the Reformed church groups in the US and Canada. And as the above chart illustrates, quite a large number of smaller Presbyterian / Reformed groups have split off these two main groups at various times, as well as hav-

Church in the United States of America in 1789. The nation's largest Presbyterian denomination, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) -- PC (USA) -- can trace their heritage back to the original PCUSA, as can the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church (CPC), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) and the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO).

"Other Presbyterian bodies in the United States include the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP), the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States (RPCUS), the Reformed Presbyterian Church General Assembly, the Reformed Presbyterian Church -- Hanover Presbytery, the Covenant Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Reformed Church, the Westminster Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Korean American Presbyterian Church, and the Free Presbyterian Church of North America.

"The territory within about a 50-mile (80 km) radius of Charlotte, North Carolina, is historically the greatest concentration of Presbyterianism in the Southern United States, while an almost identical geographic area around Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, contains probably the largest number of Presbyterians in the entire nation."

[“Presbyterianism,” wikipedia.org]

¹¹¹Largely these issues have centered over the level of adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith and the ordination of women. Implicit in this especially with those having Dutch Reformed roots is affirmation -- and at what level -- of the three pillars of the Reformed tradition: the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort. Spill over impact into subsidiary issues such as the nature and authority of scripture have flared up from time to time.

ing split off from one another.¹¹²

When one looks closely at the above chart, one pattern emerges rather clearly. And this pattern is also typical to varying degrees for Scotland, Ireland, and the Netherlands. The pattern is this: although some divisiveness emerges in the 1600s and 1700s, the largest share of splits take place in the 1800s and 1900s. Also, to be noted is that such divisiveness, even though existing in the Calvinistic traditions on the European continent apart from Holland, did not lead to the formation of such large numbers of new denominational groups as in the UK and in North America. The explanation for this is relatively simple.

First, these cultures where divisiveness occurred more prevalently developed strong traditions of personal freedom and individualism. And this was mixed into the pot with greater freedom to begin new religious groups. The legal restrictions, along with cultural attitudes against such, curbed this tendency on most of the European continent. Differences of opinion were largely kept inside the official church bodies of Protestantism. But such barriers to forming new church groups were not as strong in the UK and especially in North America. The United States in particular with its intentional creation of barriers between church and state encourage religious diversity and thus stood as the most fertile ground of all for divisiveness. Thus the cultural atmosphere encouraged this by being more tolerate of divisiveness.

Second, while the impact of the Enlightenment was felt all through the emerging western world, it found especially fertile soil in the UK and North America to flourish and evolve into the so-called 'modernism' verses 'traditionalism' controversies. Although these tensions were far broader than just religion, religious divisiveness was caught up in these conflicts and often labelled liberalism verses conservatism, even though classical definitions of this pair of terms mostly refer to political philosophy more than religion. Within Protestant Christianity generally, these conflicts centered typically over the interpretation of scripture, along with differing views of the nature and role of the authority of the Christian Bible.¹¹³

¹¹²The one consolation that members of either of these traditions may take is that an US based historical charting of Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans etc. would look similar. And this would also include to so-called 'non-denominational' churches that among themselves become a loosely structured denomination.

¹¹³The single common heritage coming from the sixteenth century reformers was the principle of *sola scriptura*, i.e., the exclusive authority of scripture for determining correct belief and practice. But implementing this principle is where huge diversity surfaces. How to define a group's views and especially how to enforce them internally on the member churches of the group become the source of battles and splits. Among the Calvinist traditions in the US, the

Consequently, the divisiveness among the Presbyterian / Reformed groups in the US represent a distinct Calvinistic version of the more general cultural wars going on in the US itself. This would basically be true for the other denominational groups as well during these two centuries.¹¹⁴ Change and uncertainty in life and in society, while eagerly embraced by many, are also vigorously resisted by others. This lies behind as a root cause of most all of these conflicts. The impact of the developing sciences, the growing ease with which large numbers of people immigrated to the US from other countries, along with many other related dynamics drove the changes that found both acceptance and opposition. When this impacted one's religious beliefs, conflicts would quickly develop along the same paths of acceptance or rejection of change coming in society at large. The distinctive is that the focus of these conflicts was on religion rather than politics or some other area of life. But the sets of values guiding both sides of the religious issues would line up with political philosophy etc. pretty evenly.

The impact of the teachings of Calvin and his successors reaches far beyond the Protestant groups that historically identify with him as a founder in some sense.

In Europe, the influence of Calvin's teachings on groups outside the Reformed Church tradition is rather limited. Early on some of the Anabaptists were influenced in limited ways by Calvin but in the sense that Zwingli's teachings about the significance of the Lord's Supper -- in contrast to that of Luther -- opened the door for Anabaptist teaching which then extended these ideas further into the purely symbolical meaning of the supper. Some of the points that Calvin is most remembered for, such as predestination, had very little impact on Anabaptist thinking. And many of the central teachings of Calvin particularly regarding church governance were vigorously rejected and often condemned by Anabaptist leaders.

"Calvinism gained some popularity in Scandinavia, especially Sweden, but was rejected in favor of Lutheranism after the Synod of Uppsala in 1593."¹¹⁵

But **in the British Isles** the story is somewhat different. Inside the Church of English, the British Puritan movement was heavily influenced by the teachings of Calvin. This movement was convinced that the reforms

role of the Synod becomes critical, but varying levels of authority over member churches existed -- and still exist -- for the synod among the Presbyterian / Reformed groups. And this functions very differently in the US with its cultural emphasis on personal freedom than in either the UK and especially in Europe where governmental involvement usually exists in some way or another.

¹¹⁴One perspective on this issue, largely inside Baptist life in the US, is the lecture that I delivered in some German universities in the early 1990s: "*Fundamentalismus in Amerika: Den Bock zum Gärtner Machen.*"

¹¹⁵"Calvinism," wikipedia.org

of the Church of England did not go far enough and needed to be extended significantly in the direction of the Reformed Churches of Switzerland. The zenith of their influence came with the First English Civil War of 1642-1646, but it virtually vanished from Anglican church life with the Restoration Act of 1660 and the Uniformity Act of 1662, after which most all Puritan clergy abandoned the Church of England.¹¹⁶

It is elsewhere in the world that the teachings of Calvin have extended greatly beyond the Reformed / Presbyterian church traditions.¹¹⁷

This is particularly true **in North America** where the English Puritans dominated much of the early settlement of the original colonies. The largest migration of Puritans from England to the North American colonies occurred between 1618 and 1630. Most of the Puritans in this migration were known as Separatists or Dissenters, e.g., the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony beginning in 1620.¹¹⁸ They campaigned for complete separation from the Church of England claiming its corruption and affinity with Roman Catholicism. The Congregational Church was one of the consequences of this movement. Both the Pilgrims of Plymouth and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony evolved into this denomination.¹¹⁹ The defining difference in the beginning

¹¹⁶For more details, see "Puritan," wikipedia.org.

¹¹⁷"Most settlers in the American Mid-Atlantic and New England were Calvinists, including the English Puritans, the French Huguenot and Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam (New York), and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of the Appalachian back country. Dutch Calvinist settlers were also the first successful European colonizers of South Africa, beginning in the 17th century, who became known as Boers or Afrikaners.

"Sierra Leone was largely colonized by Calvinist settlers from Nova Scotia, who were largely Black Loyalists, blacks who had fought for the British during the American War of Independence. John Marrant had organized a congregation there under the auspices of the Huntingdon Connection. Some of the largest Calvinist communions were started by 19th and 20th century missionaries. Especially large are those in Indonesia, Korea and Nigeria. In South Korea there are 20,000 Presbyterian congregations in about 9-10 million church members, scattered in more than 100 Presbyterian denominations. In Korea Presbyterianism is far the biggest Christian denomination." ["Calvinism," wikipedia.org]

¹¹⁸"English Christians in the 16th and 17th centuries who wished to separate from the Church of England and form independent local churches were influential politically under Oliver Cromwell, who was himself a separatist. They were eventually called Congregationalists.¹³ The Pilgrims who established the first successful colony in New England were separatists.¹⁴" ["Separatism," wikipedia.org]

¹¹⁹"Congregationalists include the Pilgrims of Plymouth, and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which were organized in union by the Cambridge Platform in 1648. These settlers had John Cotton as their most influential leader, beginning in 1633. Cotton's writings persuaded the Calvinist theologian John Owen to separate from the Presbyterian church. He became very influential in the development of Congregationalist theology and ideas of church government. Jonathan Edwards was also a Congregational-

between the Congregationalist churches and the Calvinist churches was church governance. But over time the sharp division over how to structure and administer church life diminished as the desire for ecumenical unity grew. Doctrinal diversity became less pronounced as did church governance. Since 1956, the United Church of Christ has served as an umbrella structure for many of the Congregationalist and Reformed church groups.¹²⁰

Out of the controversy in Amsterdam over predestination, that Jacobus Arminius became involved in during the early 1600s, came a sharpening of distinction between Calvinism and its critics who gradually came to be labelled as being in Arminianism.¹²¹ Those on the Arminian side in the Netherlands became objects of severe persecution and became known as the Remonstrants.¹²²

The impact of this debate¹²³ was felt in many other

ist.^[21]
“The history of Congregational churches in the United States is closely intertwined with that of American Presbyterianism, especially in New England where Congregationalist influence spilled over into Presbyterian churches farther west. Some of the first colleges and universities in America, including Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Williams, Bowdoin, Middlebury, and Amherst, all were founded by the Congregationalists, as were later Carleton, Grinnell, Oberlin, Beloit, and Pomona.” [“Congregational Church,” wikipedia.org]

¹²⁰“In 1957, the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches in the U.S. merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ. About 90% of the CC congregations affiliated with the General Council joined the United Church of Christ. Some churches abstained from the merger while others voted it down. Most of the latter congregations became members of either the CCCC (mentioned above) or the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. The latter was formed by churches and people who objected to the UCC merger because of concerns that the new national church and its regional bodies represented extra-congregational authorities that would interfere with a congregation’s right to govern itself. Thus, the NA-CCC includes congregations of a variety of theological positions. Still other congregations chose not to affiliate with any particular association of churches, or only with regional or local ones.” [“Congregational Church,” wikipedia.org]

¹²¹For more details see “History of Calvinist-Arminian debate,” wikipedia.org.

¹²²The five points of their position stood in contrast to the TULIP five points of emerging Calvinism:

- that the divine decree of predestination is conditional, not absolute;
- that the Atonement is in intention universal;
- that man cannot of himself exercise a saving faith;
- that though the grace of God is a necessary condition of human effort it does not act irresistibly in man; and
- that believers are able to resist sin but are not beyond the possibility of falling from grace.

For more details see “Remonstrants,” wikipedia.org.

¹²³“The original beliefs of Jacobus Arminius himself are commonly defined as Arminianism, but more broadly, the term may embrace the teachings of Hugo Grotius, John Wesley, and others as well. Classical Arminianism, to which Arminius is the main contributor, and Wesleyan Arminianism, to which John Wesley is the main contributor, are the two main schools of thought. Wesleyan

church groups.¹²⁴ Very notably in England, the emerging Baptist movement (with its beginning in Amsterdam in 1609 among English refugees) found itself caught up in this debate. Consequently the beginning group of Baptists, known as General Baptists, were Arminian in orientation under the leadership of Thomas Helwys and then John Smyth. But in the 1640s the Particular Baptists emerged with strong Calvinist influence.¹²⁵

This division surfaced even more prominently in the colonies of North America where the Particular Baptist London Confession of Faith in 1689 was used as a basis for the Philadelphia Baptist Confession, while the Standard Confession of 1660 reflected the General Baptist stance.¹²⁶ The modern descendants of the English General Baptists in the US are the Free Will Baptists. Most other Baptist groups in the US reflect the Particular Baptist stance in varying degrees. Both streams of Baptists are found, for example, in the Southern Baptist Convention, although Calvinism at varying levels of impact is the stronger influence historically.

Educationally. The influence of the teachings of Calvin and of his successors down through the centuries has been solidified and developed mainly through universities in Europe and North America associated with either the Reformed Church or one of the Presbyterian groups.

The beginnings of this strong emphasis on education came with Calvin’s establishment of his collège, an institute for the education of children on June 5, 1559. The two divisions of the school functioned as a primary school and an advanced school largely for preparation for ministry with faculties in both theology and law.¹²⁷

Arminianism is often identical with Methodism. Some Arminian schools of thought share certain similarities with Semipelagianism, believing the first step of salvation is by human will^[2] but classical Arminianism holds that the first step of salvation is the grace of God.^[3]

“The two systems share both history and many doctrines, and the variety of the history of Christian theology. Arminianism is related to Calvinism (or Reformed theology). However, because of their differences over the doctrines of divine predestination and salvation, many people view these schools of thought as opposed to each other. In short, because ultimately God’s Sovereignty can be overruled by man’s free will in the Arminian doctrine and their synergistic system of Salvation is not only by Grace, these differences cannot be seen as mere details.^[4]” [“Arminianism,” wikipedia.org]

¹²⁴For many helpful insights see “Arminianism,” wikipedia.org.

¹²⁵The terms ‘General’ and ‘Particular’ refer to belief either in a general atonement possibility through Christ’s death for all humanity (General) or a limited atonement (Christ died only for the elect; Particular).

¹²⁶For a listing of the many Baptist confessions of faith with hyperlinks to specific details of each see “List of Baptist confessions,” wikipedia.org.

¹²⁷“Within Geneva, Calvin’s main concern was the creation of a collège, an institute for the education of children. A site for the

The advanced académie, or schola, publica eventually emerged as the University of Geneva, i.e., Université de Genève. The university retained its focus on teaching theology until late in the 1600s when the influence of the Enlightenment pushed it toward the completely secular university that it is today. This shift was completed in 1873, although a



Faculty of Protestant Theology still remains as a part of the university and offers both a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters of Arts in Theology degree programs.¹²⁸ Additionally since 2009, it has been a part des Universités du Triangle Azur (Genève, Lausanne et Neuchâtel) and known as the Collège de théologie protestante. The founding of the school by Calvin was a natural outgrowth of his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which served as an instruction book on the basics of Protestant Christianity as he defined it. This educational focus shaped the contours of Calvinism as a strongly focused educational Christian group.

Wherever Calvin's teachings spread, usually the establishment of training schools of some kind soon followed. When the Reformed movement went north into southern Germany, the Catholic university *in Heidelberg* turned toward the Reformed Church tradition and became for a while in the late 1500s and early 1600s the academic center of Reformed Church teaching for all of Europe.¹²⁹ The tremendously influential Heidelberg Cate-

school was selected on 25 March 1558 and it opened the following year on 5 June 1559. Although the school was a single institution, it was divided into two parts: a grammar school called the collège or schola privata and an advanced school called the académie or schola publica. Calvin tried to recruit two professors for the institute, Mathurin Cordier, his old friend and Latin scholar who was now based in Lausanne, and Emmanuel Tremellius, the Regius professor of Hebrew in Cambridge. Neither was available, but he succeeded in obtaining Theodore Beza as rector. Within five years there were 1,200 students in the grammar school and 300 in the advanced school. The collège eventually became the Collège Calvin, one of the college preparatory schools of Geneva, while the académie became the University of Geneva.^[70] ["John Calvin," wikipedia.org]

¹²⁸For more details see "University of Geneva," wikipedia.org.

¹²⁹"Die wohl wirkungsreichste Zeit der Heidelberger Theologischen Fakultät begann mit dem Regierungsantritt Kurfürst Friedrichs III., der seit 1559 den Übergang der Kurpfalz zum reformierten

echismus was a major product in this era with faculty in the university playing the major role in its composition.¹³⁰ But the counter reformation followed by the Thirty Years War completely turned things around for the university. In 1803, things turned positive for the university as a reconstituted state university with a non-sectarian orientation and a secular focused school. It achieved prominence in the twentieth century primarily with its faculties in political history, law, and the physical sciences. The religion faculty regained standing and fame after WWII with notable Protestant faculty members mostly from the Reformed tradition.¹³¹ Today the faculty stands as

Protestantismus betrieb. Die Universität Heidelberg und insbesondere deren Theologische Fakultät wurde für ein paar Jahrzehnte zum geistigen Zentrum des reformierten Europa. Unter den (nach gegenwärtigem Sprachgebrauch!) „weltweit führenden“ Theologen seien genannt: Hieronymus Zanchi (1516-1590), Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583, Hauptverfasser des Heidelberger Katechismus), Caspar Olevian (1536-1587), Immanuel Tremellius (1510-1580) und David Pareus (1548-1622). Diese Blütezeit wurde bereits in den Jahren 1576-1583 kurzzeitig unterbrochen, als ein erster kurfürstlicher Konfessionswechsel zur Entlassung der Theologieprofessoren wie auch von Professoren anderer Fakultäten führte." ("Geschichte der Theologischen Fakultät," Heidelberg University at <http://www.theologie.uni-heidelberg.de/aktuelles/geschichte.html>)

¹³⁰"Elector Frederick III, sovereign of the Electoral Palatinate from 1559 to 1576, commissioned the composition of a new Catechism for his territory. While the catechism's introduction credits the 'entire theological faculty here' (at the University of Heidelberg) and 'all the superintendents and prominent servants of the church'^[1] for the composition of the catechism, Zacharius Ursinus is commonly regarded as the catechism's principal author. Caspar Olevianus (1536–1587) was formerly asserted as a co-author of the document, though this theory has been largely discarded by modern scholarship.^{[2][3]} Frederick wanted to even out the religious situation of the territory, but also to draw up a statement of belief that would combine the best of Lutheran and Reformed wisdom and could instruct ordinary people on the basics of the newfound Protestant version of the Christian faith^[4] One of the aims of the catechism was to counteract the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and so it based each of its statements on the text of the Bible.

"Commissioned by the sovereign of Palatinate, it is sometimes referred to as the Palatinate Catechism.

"The Catechism is divided into fifty-two sections, called 'Lord's Days,' which were designed to be taught on each of the 52 Sundays of the year. The Synod of Heidelberg approved the catechism in 1563. In the Netherlands, the Catechism was approved by the Synods of Wesel (1568), Emden (1571), Dort (1578), the Hague (1586), as well as the great Synod of Dort of 1618-1619, which adopted it as one of the Three Forms of Unity, together with the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort.^[5] Elders and deacons were required to subscribe and adhere to it, and ministers were required to preach on a section of the Catechism each Sunday so as to increase the often poor theological knowledge of the church members.^[5] In many Dutch Reformed denominations this practice is still continued." ["Heidelberg Catechism," wikipedia.org]

¹³¹"Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg erlebte die Heidelberger Theologische Fakultät eine große Blütezeit. Mit Gustav Hölscher (als erstem Dekan), Gerhard von Rad, Claus Westermann und Hans Walter Wolff im Alten Testament, Günther Bornkamm, Karl Georg Kuhn und Erich Dinkler im Neuen Testament, Hans Frhr.

a major contributor to Reformed Church teaching in Europe, although ecumenical focus diminishes a lot of the distinction between Lutheranism, Reformed Church teaching, and Roman Catholicism.¹³²

Elsewhere in Europe, the Reformed tradition in Holland has emphasized the role of Christian education virtually from the outset. Article 21 from the Canons of Order of the Synod of Dort (1618-1619) stresses that:

The consistories everywhere shall see to it that there are good school teachers, not only to teach the children reading, writing, languages, and the liberal arts, but also to instruct them in godliness and in the Catechism.¹³³

The first university established **in the Netherlands** in connection with the Dutch revolt from the Spanish Netherlands in the 1560s, the University of Leiden originally was a center of training in the Reformed tradition early on beginning in 1577.¹³⁴ But like most universities, the impact of the Enlightenment moved it away from its religious core values into a dominantly secularized school. The university today does have a religious studies faculty but with a primary emphasis on world religions. These studies make available a focused bachelor's, master's, and doctoral program of studies in the Reformed tradition but this is a small part of their degree offerings.¹³⁵

von Campenhausen, Heinrich Bornkamm und Martin Schmidt in der Kirchengeschichte, Edmund Schlink, Peter Brunner und Heinz-Eduard Tödt in der Systematischen Theologie sowie Wilhelm Hahn, Hans-Wolfgang Heidland und Herbert Krimm in der Praktischen Theologie gelangte die Fakultät in dem Vierteljahrhundert nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg zu weltweiter Geltung. Bis heute geben der Fakultät das 1947 auf Betreiben Schlinks gegründete Ökumenische Institut und das 1954 unter Leitung von Krimm errichtete Diakoniewissenschaftliche Institut ein besonderes Profil." ("Geschichte der Theologischen Fakultät," Heidelberg University at <http://www.theologie.uni-heidelberg.de/aktuelles/geschichte.html>)

¹³²My personal experiences in the Protestant faculty at the university in 1990-1991 as a guest research professor were enormously pleasant and helpful to my understanding of both biblical truths and modern Christianity, especially in Europe.

¹³³For more details from an 'insider' perspective, see David Kloosterman, "Reformed Education: A Glorious Heritage," *Reformed Fellowship Inc., The Outlook*, October 2006, volumen 56, No. 9, pp. 9-12.

¹³⁴The presence within half a century of the date of its foundation of such scholars as Justus Lipsius, Joseph Scaliger, Franciscus Gomarus, Hugo Grotius, Jacobus Arminius, Daniel Heinsius and Gerhard Johann Vossius, raised Leiden university to be a respected and highly thought of institute within Europe. Renowned philosopher Baruch Spinoza was based close to Leiden during this period and interacted with numerous scholars at the university. The learning and reputation of Jacobus Gronovius, Herman Boerhaave, Tiberius Hemsterhuis and David Ruhnken, among others, enabled Leiden to maintain its reputation for excellence down to the end of the 18th century." ["Leiden University," wikipedia.org]

¹³⁵For more details see the university web site for religious studies in the Humanities division of the university: <http://www.hum.leiden.edu/education/bachelors-programmes/ba-theology.html>.

In the UK, **particularly Scotland**, the University of Edinburgh stands as a leading early school with Presbyterian religious focus in its beginnings starting in 1583. Initially the emphasis was upon law and divinity studies. The theology side is now known as New College (The School of Divinity in The University of Edinburgh) and serves now a broader function of religious studies in general as well as being a primary ministry training center for the Church of Scotland.¹³⁶ Just as in the Netherlands so also in Scotland, there has been the diversification of training schools for the Reformed tradition. The establishment of numerous denominational bodies within the Reformed / Presbyterian traditions in both countries has also brought many new schools connected to each of the denominational groups.¹³⁷

In North America, the Reformed tradition is represented in both the Presbyterian universities and the Reformed Church universities. And there are many of both kinds in the US especially, but a smaller number in Canada.

Additionally, in the US a new pattern of higher education schools developed beginning in the 1800s. ¹³⁸The church related university with its divinity school and then the free standing church related seminary. The seminary normally was a graduate school requiring a bachelor's degree prior to beginning studies at the masters and doctoral levels. Not until the twentieth century did state supported public universities begin offering degree programs in religious studies. Thus today across denominational lines religious programs of stud-

¹³⁶For more details see "School of Divinity, *The University of Edinburgh*" at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/>.

¹³⁷Among those in Scotland is the *University of St. Andrews*, School of Divinity with a very strong religious studies program as well. For details see <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/divinity/> St. Mary's College, the home of the divinity school in the university was founded in 1539 also shifted over to the Reformed tradition with the establishment of the Church of Scotland and the influence of John Knox. Their fascinating history is detailed under "History of St. Mary's College" at the divinity school web site. First as a center of training for the Scottish Roman Catholic Church it later came under the Reformed tradition by governmental decree in the late 1500s.

Another important early training center is the *University of Aberdeen* founded in 1495. The King's College was first a Roman Catholic school until the switch over to Presbyterianism following the Scottish Reformation in 1560. Today the religious studies programs are a part of the School of Divinity, History, and Philosophy. Degrees at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels are available.

Although the *University of Glasgow* originally had a Roman Catholic focus in its beginnings in 1451, the theology focus shifted to Presbyterianism after the Scottish Reformation but without the strong development true of the above Scottish universities.

¹³⁸The exclusive legal tradition of separation of church and state in the US has contributed greatly to this distinctive pattern found in the United States.

ies are found in the private universities, the seminaries, and the public universities.¹³⁹

In US Presbyterian life, the capstone university has been Princeton University historically.¹⁴⁰ Founded by New Light Presbyterians in 1756 for training ministers, the emerging university has been a central influence for Scots-Irish Presbyterians since then. It soon became one of the leading schools in the developing higher educational system in the United States, and has retained that leadership role into the present time. Princeton Theological Seminary was formed in 1812 as a semi-branch of the university and has followed the university in its leadership role in theological education in the United States. The fundamentalist-modernist controversies of the 1920s led to the establishment of the more conservative Westminster Theological Seminary in Glenside, Pennsylvania, in 1929. While Princeton Seminary is historically more connected to the Presbyterian tradition, Westminster Seminary embraces both the Presbyterian and Reformed Church traditions in the US. Westminster functions as an independent seminary, but Princeton has links to the university placing it somewhere between a university divinity school and a fully independent seminary.

On the Reformed Church side of Calvinism, several continuing schools have emerged over the past three plus centuries: Central College (Pella, Iowa); Hope College (Holland, Michigan); Northwestern College (Orange City, Iowa); and two seminaries: New Brunswick Theological Seminary (New Brunswick, New Jersey) and Western Theological Seminary (Holland, Michigan). Most all of these schools that began in the late 1700s and early 1800s came from regional synods of the Dutch Reformed tradition in order to provide local ministerial training rather than depending on ministers being trained in Holland at Dutch Reformed schools there.

When one comes to the middle 1800s and later, an explosion of schools and colleges takes place usually in connection to one of the newly formed Presbyterian or Reformed Church denominations.¹⁴¹ For example, one of the better known schools is Calvin College and

¹³⁹Additionally Bible institutes and schools offer programs of studies. Typically these are at a much lower academic standard and clearly have much less academic recognition than university degrees.

¹⁴⁰Princeton University is one of the nine institutions of higher education founded prior to the American Revolution in the late 1700s. Most of these were Puritan (Congregational) in religious orientation. But the Queen's College, now Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey, was the sole Dutch Reformed school in this early group. It was under the sponsorship of the Dutch Reformed Church from its founding in 1766 to 1864 when it became a state supported university in New Jersey.

¹⁴¹For an overview of the rapid expansion of new Presbyterian groups in the US, see "American Presbyterianism," wikipedia.org.

Seminary formed in 1876 in Grand Rapids, MI. as a part of the Christian Reformed Church in North America.

One of the umbrella organizations seeking to co-ordinate higher education identity within the Calvinist tradition in the United States is the Association of Reformed Colleges and Universities.¹⁴² Presently made up of ten institutions of higher learning inside the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions, it functions largely as a clearing house of information and assistance to individuals seeking education within these American traditions. Particularly useful is guidance on where to study for the ministry when the individual plans to seek ordination in one of the synods of these two traditions.

Particularly inside the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions, there has been a continuing emphasis on well trained and knowledgeable ministerial leadership. As a consequence, most every denominational group emerging newly or as a results of splits or mergers within these two traditions set about establishing a training school very early upon its founding. With the proliferation of these denominational groups in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came a large number of new schools intended to support the work of the newly formed denominations.¹⁴³

Key leaders. Beginning with Calvin and Zwingli in the 1500s as well as some prior to them, the movement labelled Calvinism has attracted a considerable number of Christian leaders who have contributed to the growth of this movement.¹⁴⁴ Although the line of distinction is

¹⁴²Largely because of a nationally oriented emphasis on higher education within the United States, the more solid academic oriented schools will seek academic accreditation from one of the regional Association of Schools and Colleges. Additionally at the masters and doctoral levels more specialized accreditation is usually sought. The primary agency here is the Association of Theological Schools.

¹⁴³Although higher education has typically been stressed substantially in the various Calvinistic traditions, the pattern of many newly established schools in North America in connection to newly formed denominational groups among Calvinists was not unique among these two religious traditions. Most every Christian group establishing itself in the new world early on put considerable energy and effort into establishing schools that would support and expand the ministry of the denomination. For more details see "Higher Education in the United States," wikipedia.org, particularly the "History" subsection.

¹⁴⁴First-generation Reformed theologians include Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), Martin Bucer (1491–1551), Wolfgang Cappel (1478–1541), John Oecolampadius (1482–1531), and Guillaume Farel (1489–1565). These reformers came from diverse academic backgrounds, but later distinctives of Reformed theology can already be detected in their thought, especially the priority of scripture as a source of authority. Scripture was also viewed as a unified whole, which led to a covenantal theology of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper as visible signs of the covenant of grace. Another Reformed distinctive present in these theologians was their denial of the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord's supper. Each of these theologians also understood salvation to be

sometimes very dim between the two categories, leaders in this movement have tended to come out of pastoral leadership and out of academic leadership. With the strong academic emphasis in this movement, many scholars and theologians have been produced over the centuries. And a considerable number of these were also local church pastors as well.

During the sixteenth century those identified with this movement include the following individuals.¹⁴⁵

by grace alone, and affirmed a doctrine of particular election (the teaching that some people are chosen by God for salvation). Martin Luther and his successor Phillip Melancthon were undoubtedly significant influences on these theologians, and to a larger extent later Reformed theologians. The doctrine of justification by faith alone was a direct inheritance from Luther.

“John Calvin (1509–64), Heinrich Bullinger (1504–75), Wolfgang Musculus (1497–1563), Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-62), and Andreas Hyperius (1511–64) belong to the second generation of Reformed theologians. Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536–59) was one of the most influential theologies of the era^[10] Toward the middle of the 16th century, the Reformed began to commit their beliefs to confessions of faith, which would shape the future definition of the Reformed faith. The 1549 *Consensus Tigurinus* brought together those who followed Zwingli and Bullinger’s memorialist theology of the Lord’s supper, which taught that the supper simply serves as a reminder of Christ’s death, and Calvin’s view that the supper serves as a means of grace with Christ actually present, though spiritually rather than bodily. The document demonstrates the diversity as well as unity in early Reformed theology. The remainder of the 16th century saw an explosion of confessional activity. The stability and breadth of Reformed theology during this period stand in marked contrast to the bitter controversy experienced by Lutherans prior to the 1579 *Formula of Concord*.^{[11]”}

[“Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁴⁵“Calvinism (also called the Reformed tradition or the Reformed faith) is a major branch of Western Christianity that follows the theological tradition and forms of Christian practice of John Calvin and other Reformation-era theologians. Calvinists broke with the Roman Catholic church but differed with Lutherans on the real presence of Christ in the Lord’s supper, theories of worship, and the use of God’s law for believers, among other things.^[1] Calvinism originated with the Reformation in Switzerland, Huldrych Zwingli who began preaching in Zurich in 1519. Zwingli and Reformer in Basel John Oecolampadius became embroiled in conflict over the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist with Wittenburg Reformer Martin Luther, leading to a division between Lutheran and Zwinglian Protestants. Several theologians succeeded Zwingli, the best known of which is John Calvin in Geneva, but other early Reformers like John Oecolampadius, Heinrich Bullinger, Peter Martyr Vermigli, and Wolfgang Musculus were also very influential in the development of Reformed theology.

“The Reformed faith spread throughout Europe in the 16th century, with different characteristics in different places. Calvinism was the dominant form of Protestantism in France during this time, and after a period of struggle Calvinists were officially tolerated there. Under the leadership of John Knox the Church of Scotland, which was broadly Reformed in character, became the established church in Scotland. In the Netherlands, Calvinism also became the official established religion following a period of persecution. Germany remained predominately Lutheran during the 16th century, but Reformed worship was promoted intermittently by rulers in the Palatinate. Reformed ideas also influenced Protestants in Eastern Europe. The reform of the Church of England was also influenced by Reformed theologians, and remained so throughout the 16th

First generation leaders (1519-1531): Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), Martin Bucer (1491–1551), Wolfgang Capito (1478–1541), John Oecolampadius (1482–1531), and Guillaume Farel (1489–1565).

Second generation leaders (1531-1566): John Calvin (1509–64), Heinrich Bullinger (1504–75), Wolfgang Musculus (1497–1563), Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-62), and Andreas Hyperius (1511–64). At the heart of the emergence of Calvin as the best known figure among these early leaders is his writings and their massive distribution over Europe. Although most of the others produced writings, none was as prolific a writer as Calvin was and none had his writings distributed so widely as did Calvin. He articulated the general thinking of most all these individuals very well, initially in Latin and later in French. Quickly translations of his works into the other European languages were made and thus distribution extended itself extensively. He was not a greater thinker or more brilliant theologian than any of these other early leaders, in fact many were much smarter than he was. But the ‘marketing’ of his writings put him at the top of the list of influential thinkers.

The **successors of these beginning leaders** surface at different periods of history.

In the period from about **1560 to 1600** are the names of John Willock and John Knox who carried Reformed teachings to Scotland during this period. Calvin’s successor at Geneva, Theodore Beza, produced a substantial amount of writings but without the scriptural insights that Calvin possessed.¹⁴⁶ In the Netherlands Reformed teaching came rather much through “the back door.” Influences from Reformed teaching came primarily through refugees from England and Germany resettling in the Netherlands fleeing persecution usually from Roman Catholic rulers. Often in Germany tensions between Lutheranism and Calvinism, particularly in the Palatine region of southwestern Germany, led to a growing influence of Reformed teachings which then filtered into the Netherlands.¹⁴⁷ Apart from Zach-
century.”

[“History of Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁴⁶For example, in his *Right of Magistrates* he contradicted Calvin by arguing for armed resistance to tyrannical rulers. This emboldened the French Huguenots to fight the French kings and undergo a blood bath in the French Wars of Religion from 1562 to 1598. See “History of Calvinism,” wikipedia.org for details.

¹⁴⁷ “There was frequent interchange between Swiss and German Protestants early in the Reformation, and Bucer’s Strasbourg had some Reformed characteristics, but Germany remained firmly Lutheran and anti-Calvinist through 1560.^[41] Following the death of Lutheran Wittenberg reformer Philipp Melancthon in 1560, Frederick III, Elector Palatine began to promote the Reformed faith in his own realm. He invited two students of Calvin, Zacharias Ursinus and Kaspar Olevianus, to the university city of Heidelberg in 1561. The two men co-operated in writing the Heidelberg Catechism in 1563 to replace the conflicting catechisms currently cir-

arias Ursinus and Kaspar Olevianus, who were major contributors to the Heidelberg Catechism in 1563, no outstanding leaders emerged either in Germany or Holland during this period. During the same era, Reformed influence flowed out of Germany eastward as well into Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, and Transylvania. Also although numerous individuals played a role in this, no particularly outstanding Reformed teachers emerged.

In the **seventeenth century**, the one figure who emerges first as an advocate of Calvinism and then as an opponent is the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius. The controversy around him sparked the Synod of Dort that produced the Canons of Dort in 1619 that essentially condemned Arminius' teachings.

From the beginning of the 1600s to 1750 Reformed teachings came under the impact of the Nadere Reformation, which sought to completely saturate Dutch life with the Reformed teachings.¹⁴⁸ Two leaders heavily influenced by English Puritan thinking, a professor, Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), and a pastor, Wilhelmus a Brakel (1635-1711), were leaders of this movement in Holland. Voetius and the Dutch philosopher René Descartes tangled bitterly at Utrecht over Voetius' condemnation of the Cartesian philosophy that Descartes advocated. It stood in opposition to the emerging Scholasticism that Voetius advocated, the Reformed side which was known as Reformed scholasticism. This perspective was highly rationalistic and based on certain principles of Aristotelean philosophy. Although minimal touches of this can be seen in Calvin, it was the third and fourth generation Calvinists who came under heavy influence from this general philosophical movement -- Scholasticism in general.¹⁴⁹ Wilhelmus à Brakel, culating in the realm.¹⁴² Despite opposition from the Holy Roman Emperor and other German princes, Frederick continued to institute Reformed worship in the Palatinate. In 1566 he was called to appear at the Diet of Augsburg to account for his violation of the Treaty of Augsburg. His testimony was so impressive that no action was taken against him, leaving the Palatinate free to continue in a Reformed direction.¹⁴³ Frederick died in 1576 and was succeeded by his son Louis VI, who was not friendly to the Reformed faith. 600 Reformed professors and ministers were expelled.¹⁴⁴ These refugees scattered to various cities. In 1583, John Casimir restored the Reformed faith in the Palatinate, and this policy was continued by his successor Frederick IV. Some other German states and cities also adopted the Heidelberg Catechism and the Reformed faith.¹⁴⁵ ["History of Calvinism," wikipedia.org]

¹⁴⁸This came as one segment of a larger religious movement generally labeled the Second Reformation (1621-1650) that swept across Europe and the British Isles. Different labels will show up depending on the region and the Protestant perspective: Switzerland: considered but as extension of the Reformation begun with Calvin; Scotland: Second Scottish Reformation or Covenanters; England: Puritan Awakening and the Pilgrims; Netherlands: Nadere Reformatie or Further Reformation.

¹⁴⁹"Scholasticism is a method of critical thought which dominated teaching by the academics ("scholastics," or "schoolmen") of medieval universities in Europe from about 1100-1700, and a program of employing that method in articulating and defending

pastor in Rotterdam, produced his magnum opus, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, which articulated Reformed teachings from the scholastic perspective and provided a defining standard for the Reformed tradition coming out of the Second Reformed Reformation from the Netherlands. This four volume work has been translated into many languages and continues to be a major defining work on what it means to be in the Calvinistic tradition.

Although Dutch Reformed teaching spread to South Africa beginning in 1652 through the Dutch East India Company, no leaders in the Reformed church tradition emerged here. The spread of Calvinism in Germany during this era was confined to limited regions and depended more on the religious orientation of regional political rules than on outstanding teachers of the tradition. Somewhat along similar lines in the British Isles, the Church of Scotland and the Church of Ireland, along with the Church of England, had adopted mild forms of Calvinistic teaching, e.g., the Lambeth Articles, dogma in an increasingly pluralistic context. It originated as an outgrowth of, and a departure from, Christian monastic schools at the earliest European universities.¹ The first institutions in the West to be considered universities were established in Italy, France, Spain and England in the late 11th and the 12th centuries for the study of arts, law, medicine, and theology,² such as the University of Salerno, the University of Bologna, and the University of Paris. It is difficult to define the date at which they became true universities, although the lists of *studia generalia* for higher education in Europe held by the Catholic Church and its various religious orders are a useful guide.

"Not so much a philosophy or a theology as a method of learning, scholasticism places a strong emphasis on dialectical reasoning to extend knowledge by inference, and to resolve contradictions. Scholastic thought is also known for rigorous conceptual analysis and the careful drawing of distinctions. In the classroom and in writing, it often takes the form of explicit disputation: a topic drawn from the tradition is broached in the form of a question, opponents' responses are given, a counterproposal is argued and opponent's arguments rebutted. Because of its emphasis on rigorous dialectical method, scholasticism was eventually applied to many other fields of study.

"As a program, scholasticism began as an attempt at harmonization on the part of medieval Christian thinkers: to harmonize the various authorities of their own tradition, and to reconcile Christian theology with classical and late antiquity philosophy, especially that of Aristotle but also of Neoplatonism.³ (See also Christian apologetics.)

"Some of the main figures of scholasticism include Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Abelard, Alexander of Hales, Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas's masterwork *Summa Theologica*, considered to be the pinnacle of scholastic, medieval, and Christian philosophy,⁴ began while Aquinas was regent master at the studium provinciale of Santa Sabina in Rome, the forerunner of the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, Angelicum. Important work in the scholastic tradition has been carried on well past Aquinas's time, for instance by Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina, and also among Lutheran and Reformed thinkers."

["Scholasticism," wikipedia.org]

in the late 1500s through early 1600s. But the English Civil War beginning in 1642 changed the landscape considerably. The Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger & Shorter Catechisms, the Directory for the Publick Worship of God and The Form of Presbyterian Church Government, developed and adopted between 1643 and 1649, sought to impact the Protestant world toward Calvinism. But the monarch of King Charles II beginning in 1660 openly supported the Church of England and suppressed Reformed teaching in England. Not until the Act of Toleration in 1689 were non Anglican churches permitted in England.

During the seventeenth, and especially the **eighteenth** centuries, a lot of the advancement of Calvinism took place in North America.¹⁵⁰ Significant to this was the impact of the First Great Awakening on the various Reformed churches in North America.¹⁵¹ Two key leaders

¹⁵⁰“In 1620, the Mayflower’ arrived at Plymouth with the Pilgrims, most of them who were of a Calvinistic separatist group known as the Brownists. Other Calvinistic Puritans settled in the nearby Massachusetts Bay Colony. Meanwhile, in 1628, an American branch of the Dutch Reformed Church was established by the Dutch colonists in the colony of New Netherlands, a church which eventually would become the Reformed Church in America. Meanwhile, Roger Williams established a Baptist church in Providence, Rhode Island, which had been organized along Calvinist lines.^[54] In the 18th century, Calvinistic Baptists would found the Philadelphia Association, eventually adopting a modified version of the 1689 London Baptist Confession in 1742, renaming it the Philadelphia Confession.

“Presbyterianism would be established in the colonies in 1703, which the establishment of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. In time, two other presbyteries would be formed, constituting a Synod in 1717. In 1729, the Presbyterians would formally adopt the Westminster Confession and Catechisms as their confessional standards. Scottish Churches under the auspices of their churches in the old country would also establish churches in the 18th century, with the Associate Presbytery being established by the Seeders in 1758 and the Covenanters founding the Reformed Presbytery in 1774. Many of the Seceders and Covenanters would merge in 1782 to form the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Other Covenanters would form the Reformed Presbytery, which, in the wake of the ‘Old-Light/New Light’ Controversy, would split into the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod. In 1789, the Presbyterians who had been formed in 1703 with the establishment of the first presbytery, formed the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. [“History of Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁵¹“The First Awakening (or The Great Awakening) was a Christian revitalization movement that swept Protestant Europe and British America, and especially the American colonies in the 1730s and 1740s, leaving a permanent impact on American religion. It resulted from powerful preaching that gave listeners a sense of deep personal revelation of their need of salvation by Jesus Christ. Pulling away from ritual and ceremony, the Great Awakening made Christianity intensely personal to the average person by fostering a deep sense of spiritual conviction and redemption, and by encouraging introspection and a commitment to a new standard of personal morality.^[1]

“The movement was a monumental event in New England that challenged established authority and incited rancor and division between old traditionalists who insisted on the continuing importance

in this were Jonathan Edwards with Calvinistic Puritan roots and George Whitefield the Anglican preacher reflecting Church of England perspectives. Not all groups were impacted but many Presbyterian and Reformed Churches were heavily influenced by this movement.¹⁵² Some of the impact generated controversy and splits as well, as the Old Light / New Light controversy among Calvinists reflects.¹⁵³

In the **nineteenth century**, the movement known as Neo-Calvinism gained footing in some Reformed and Presbyterian circles, largely through the influence of the Dutch Calvinist Abraham Kuyper.¹⁵⁴ But over the past

of ritual and doctrine, and the new revivalists, who encouraged emotional involvement and personal commitment. It had a major impact in reshaping the Congregational church, the Presbyterian church, the Dutch Reformed Church, and the German Reformed denomination, and strengthened the small Baptist and Methodist Anglican denominations. It had little impact on most Anglicans or on Quakers.^[2] In some places it brought Christianity to African slaves.

“Unlike the Second Great Awakening, which began about 1800 and which reached out to the unchurched, the First Great Awakening focused on people who were already church members. It changed their rituals, their piety and their self-awareness. To the evangelical imperatives of Reformation Protestantism, 18th century American Christians added emphases on divine outpourings of the Holy Spirit and conversions that implanted within new believers an intense love for God. Revivals encapsulated those hallmarks and disseminated the newly created evangelicalism into the early republic.^[3]”

[“First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁵²“Although the idea of a ‘great awakening’ has been contested by Butler (1982) as vague and exaggerated, it is clear that the period was a time of increased religious activity, particularly in New England. The First Great Awakening led to changes in Americans’ understanding of God, themselves, the world around them, and religion. In the Middle and Southern colonies, especially in the ‘back country’ regions, the Awakening was influential among Presbyterians. In the southern Tidewater and Low Country, northern Baptist and Methodist preachers converted both whites and blacks, enslaved and free. The whites especially welcomed blacks into active roles in congregations, including as preachers. Before the American Revolution, the first black Baptist churches were founded in the South in Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia; in Petersburg, Virginia, two black Baptist churches were founded. Samuel Davies, a Presbyterian minister who would later become the fourth president of Princeton University,^[7] was noted for converting African slaves to Christianity in unusually large numbers, and is credited with the first sustained proselytization of slaves in Virginia.^[8]”

[“First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁵³“The Calvinist denominations were especially affected. For example, Congregational churches in New England experienced 98 schisms, which in Connecticut also had impact on which group would be considered ‘official’ for tax purposes.^[16] These splits were between the New Lights (those who were influenced by the Great Awakening) and the Old Lights (those who were more traditional). It is estimated in New England that in the churches there were about 1/3 each of New Lights, Old Lights, and those who saw both sides as valid.^[17]” [“First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁵⁴“Noe-Calvinism, a form of Dutch Calvinism, is the movement initiated by the theologian and former Dutch prime minister

two plus centuries a number of individuals and institutions have been associated with this movement within the Reformed tradition.¹⁵⁵ This is an attempt to interpret all of life and society including government, business etc. from a supposedly Christian world-view based on the teachings of Abraham Kuyper. Its intention is that this world-view will be the official and governmentally mandated perspective for everyone in society.¹⁵⁶ Theologically it is especially this movement that has the strong emphasis on the T-U-L-I-P definition of Calvinism, often labelled Hyper-Calvinism.

At the close of the twentieth century another form of Calvinism has emerged labelled “New Calvinism.”¹⁵⁷ Again, just as Neo-Calvinism found popularity among more conservative branches of Calvinism, even more so is the New Calvinism limited to more conservative groups and individuals linked to the Reformed tradition. But many of its critics strongly deny that this is Calvinism at all, based on the contention that Calvinism cannot be defined simply from the TULIP five points perspective. Historical Calvinism must be based on the Three Forms of Unity adopted in 1618-1619, which is made up of the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Heidel-

Abraham Kuyper. James Bratt has identified a number of different types of Dutch Calvinism: The Seceders—split into the Reformed Church ‘West’ and the Confessionals; and the Neo-Calvinists—the Positives and the Antithetical Calvinists. The Seceders were largely infralapsarian and the Neo-Calvinists usually supralapsarian.^[1]” [“Neo-Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁵⁵**Key individuals associated with Neo-Calvinism:** Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer; Abraham Kuyper; Herman Bavinck; Herman Dooyeweerd; Albert Wolters; Craig Bartholomew; Alvin Plantinga; Nicholas Wolterstorff; George Marsden; Cornelius Plantinga; D. H. Th. Vollenhoven; E. L. Hebden Taylor; H. Evan Runner; Hans Rookmaaker; Auguste Lecerf; Chuck Colson; Stephanus Jacobus du Toit.

Neo-Calvinist institutions and organizations: Arrowhead Christian Academy in Redlands, California; Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Cardus (formerly known as The Work Research Foundation), Hamilton, Ontario; The Center for Public Justice; The Christian Labour Association of Canada; CCO (Coalition for Christian Outreach), Pittsburgh, PA; Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, USA; Free University in Amsterdam; Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, Canada; Kuyper College; Kuyper Foundation; Geneva College, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania; Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, Canada; Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL; The Kings College, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

For more details see “Neo-Calvinism,” wikipedia.org.

¹⁵⁶For an “insider” perspective advocating this, see The Kuyperian Blog at <http://kuyperian.blogspot.com/>.

For a rather stinging critique of this movement see Shrewd Dove Apologetics at <http://shrewddoveapologetics.com>.

¹⁵⁷“The New Calvinism is a growing perspective within conservative Evangelicalism that embraces the fundamentals of 16th century Calvinism while maintaining relevance to the present day. In March 2009, TIME magazine ranked it as one of the ‘10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now.’^[1] Some of the major figures in this area are John Piper,^[2] Mark Driscoll, Al Mohler,^[1] Mark Dever,^[3] C.J. Mahaney and Joshua Harris.^[4]” [“New Calvinism,” wikiNedia.org]

berg Catechism.

As is noticeable, during the past couple of centuries no leaders of the same stature that typified the first two centuries of the movement have emerged. The splitting of Calvinism into an almost incalculable number of groups has diminished its ability to produce significant, influential leaders across a broad spectrum. Within each of the splintered groups, leaders clearly are present but their impact is largely limited to their own group.

Twentieth-first Century. At the beginning of the present century, Calvinism still exerts influence across Protestant church life. But the countless varieties of Calvinism, both inside the Presbyterian / Reformed traditions and outside, dilute its influence in very substantial ways.¹⁵⁸ Quarrels over exactly what constitutes Calvinism and who can legitimately be called a Calvinist muddy the waters considerably. Calvinism has suffered the fate of so many other Protestant groups with internal quarrelling and bickering over fine points of belief and practice. The massive numbers of church groups claiming Calvinistic heritage and/or orientation become both confusing and discouraging for many.

This comes in the cultural contexts of both Europe and North America where ecumenicism on the one hand is a powerful influence diminishing the sense of need for distinctive theological traits even coming out of history. Christian ‘oneness’ often takes priority over distinctive beliefs. And on the other hand, the younger generation is expressing less and less interest in any version of Christianity with strong doctrinal stances that put it in conflict with other groups. “Why do we even need denominations?” is a frequent question and

¹⁵⁸Some of this variety is reflected in the list below. These groups represent early movements geographically that have provided a foundation for much of the contemporary diversity within this tradition::

- **Boer Calvinists:** Boere-Afrikaners that hold to Reformed Theology.
- **Huguenots:** followers of Calvinism in France, the 16th and 17th century.
- **Pilgrims:** Puritan separatists who left Europe for America in search of religious toleration.
- **Presbyterians:** originate in Scotland
- **Puritans:** English
- **Continental Reformed churches:** Calvinist churches originating in continental Europe
- **Waldensians:** Italian, precede Calvinism but some today identify with Reformed theology

As a sampling of the impact of Calvinism on other religious groups note the following:

- **Crypto-Calvinism:** German Protestants accused of Calvinist leanings within the Lutheran church in the late 16th century
- **Jansenism:** a radical, Roman Catholic Augustinian group with some doctrinal distinctives similar to those of Calvinism
- **Calvinistic Methodists**
- **Molinism**

demand heard in our day. No one can clearly predict the future of Calvinism inside Protestant Christianity in the coming decades. Protestantism is currently undergoing massive changes and re-orientation. In parts of Europe and to some extent in North America it is entering the early stages of a survivalist mode with membership levels dropping rapidly.

And yet at the same time traces of spiritual renewal can be documented that are producing a new kind of Protestantism without much interest or concern for doctrinal differences. Many of the European state churches already have formal connections in which distinctions within Protestantism exist at a very secondary level of importance, if at all.

In North America, cooperation across denominational lines either through structures like the National Council of Churches or through more informal patterns such as Evangelicalism where different groups are linked together via para church organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals. What is becoming increasingly clear is that regional rather than national structures are becoming the most important defining structure for church groups. And that any 'top down' type of church governance starting outside the local congregation whether a synod or presbytery is viewed increasingly negatively.

In many of the so-called developing countries of the world, denominationalism is pretty much dead and is being replaced by some form of a 'national Christian church' with nationalistic concerns taking priority over particular denominational interests.¹⁵⁹ Whether such will become a dominating pattern in North America or not, I am not smart enough to know. Inside the Protestant state churches of Europe something of this nature is fairly well advanced, but among the Free Protestant Churches a looser structure of cooperation across denominational lines seems to be the trend.

II. The Ideology

In understanding a movement of any kind, grasping both the history and the thought structures developed inside it are essential for accurate comprehension. After looking at the history of Calvinism, now we need to survey the thought structure of the movement. This includes not just the distinctive doctrinal beliefs advocated by those holding to some form of Calvinism. But the ideology of the movement will cover how churches are organized both locally and regionally along with worship practices. A movement is characterized not just by how it thinks but also by how it acts.

A. Special Terminology

¹⁵⁹One example of this is the Christian Association of Nigeria, the umbrella body of all of Nigeria's Christian churches.

Calvinism has generated a very distinctive set of terms not commonly found among other religious groups, Christian or otherwise. Below is a listing of several of these distinctive terms.

- **Calvinism:** "1. the doctrines and teachings of John Calvin or his followers, emphasizing predestination, the sovereignty of God, the supreme authority of the Scriptures, and the irresistibility of grace. Compare Arminianism. 2. adherence to these doctrines."

This definition comes from Dictionary.com but only partially covers the topic. Many scholars contend that Calvinism in the modern concept of the term refers more to the later expansion and modification of the initial teachings of Calvin in the 1500s.¹⁶⁰

- **Hyper-Calvinism:** "Hyper-Calvinism, previously known as High Calvinism, is a branch of Protestant theology that denies a general design in the death of Jesus Christ, the idea of an indiscriminate free offer of the gospel to all persons and a universal duty to believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for them. It is at times regarded as a variation of Calvinism, but critics emphasize its differences to traditional Calvinistic beliefs." ["Hyper-Calvinism," wikipedia.org].

Historically the term 'hyper-Calvinism' first surfaced in the nineteenth century as a replacement for the earlier terms of 'high-Calvinism' and 'false Calvinism.'

- **Predestination:** As a distinctive of Calvinism, the term is usually defined more nationalistically than when in general usage: "The doctrine of predestination in Calvinism deals with the question of the control God exercises over the world. In the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith, God 'freely and unchangeably ordained whatsoever comes to pass.'^[1] The second

¹⁶⁰Calvinism can be a misleading term because the religious tradition it denotes is and has always been diverse, with a wide range of influences rather than a single founder. The movement was first called 'Calvinism' by Lutherans who opposed it, and many within the tradition would prefer to use the word Reformed.^[3] ^[4] Since the Arminian controversy, the Reformed (as a branch of Protestantism distinguished from Lutheranism) are divided into Arminians and Calvinists, however it is now rare to call Arminians Reformed, as many see these two schools of thought as opposed, making the terms Calvinist and Reformed synonymous.^{[5][6]}

"While the Reformed theological tradition addresses all of the traditional topics of Christian theology, the word Calvinism is sometimes used to refer to particular Calvinist views on soteriology and predestination, which are summarized in part by the five points of Calvinism. Some have also argued that Calvinism as a whole stresses the sovereignty or rule of God in all things – in salvation but also in all of life."

["Calvinism," wikipedia.org]

use of the word 'predestination' applies this to the salvation, and refers to the belief that God appointed the eternal destiny of some to salvation by grace, while leaving the remainder to receive eternal damnation for all their sins, even their original sin. The former is called 'unconditional election', and the latter 'reprobation'. In Calvinism, people are predestined and effectually called in due time (regenerated/born again) to faith by God." ["Predestination (Calvinism)," wikipedia.org]

The term has been understood in many different ways down through the centuries of Christian teaching, and many other religions embrace some idea of predestination regarding the ordering of life.¹⁶¹ A product mainly of Enlightenment rationalism, the clash between a predeterminism of all events in history and the individual's freedom of choice lies at the heart of the discussion and often debate over predestination.

- **Presbyterian:** This term has multiple meanings depending on the context in which it is being used, as the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary reflects:

- a) Noun: a member of a Presbyterian church
- b) Adjective: of or relating to a Christian church in Scotland, the U.S., and other countries that is officially led by a group of ministers and elders (called a presbytery)

i) often not capitalized: characterized by a graded system of representative ecclesiastical bodies (as presbyteries) exercising legislative and judicial powers

ii) of, relating to, or constituting a Protestant Christian church that is Presbyterian in government and traditionally Calvinistic in doctrine

The term Presbyterian originates in the Scottish Reformed Church tradition in connection to debates over church governance from the time of John Knox in the late 1500s. As such, especially in North America, the term Presbyterian stands in contrast to Reformed and often distinguishes Scottish and Irish origins for the church rather than Dutch as is the case for Reformed. Historically and still to some extent today this term alludes to organizational structure and governance in many of the churches in the Reformed tradition.

- **Presbytery:** Both inside the Calvinist traditions as well as with some other Christian denominations the term has a variety of meanings.¹⁶² As a specification of church governance, it normally specifies among Presbyterians a regional body of leaders.¹⁶³ As an architectural term, it refers to the chancel or sanctuary of the church facilities. But in Roman Catholic and Anglican tradition the term may refer either to the rectory or parsonage. Or, it as a shortened form of *Presbyterium* will designate a body of ordained priests such as a diocese or *eparchy*. Also in most of the Reformed churches, the term *Presbyter* can surface as a synonym of the terms minister, pastor, or elder.
- **Reformed tradition:** Again this term has multiple shades of meanings, all of which stem out of the work of the Protestant Reformers in the 1500s. Although Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin all broke with the Roman Catholic Church in their

¹⁶²Presbytery may refer to:

- **Presbytery (church polity)**, a governing body of elders
- **Presbytery (architecture)**, the area of a church building more commonly referred to as the "chancel" or "sanctuary"
- **Presbytery (residence)**, or "rectory", the home of one or more Roman Catholic priests
- **Presbyterium**, a body of ordained, active priests in the Roman Catholic or Anglican churches

["Presbytery," wikipedia.org]

¹⁶³In presbyterianism, congregations are united in accountability to a regional body called the presbytery, or, among Continental Reformed bodies, the *classis*. Presbyteries are made up of the minister and an elder 'commissioned' from each parish, as well as other clergy such as theological college professors, chaplains, and retired ministers. When there is a larger number of ordained ministers than ruling elders, additional ruling elders are appointed to redress the imbalance. The commissioners of the presbytery are expected to exercise their own judgment and are not required to represent the majority view of their congregations.

"The officers of a presbytery are a moderator and a clerk. The moderator acts as chair of presbytery meetings and has a casting, but not deliberative, vote. As with the moderators of synods and assemblies, the moderatorship is a *primus inter pares* position appointed by the presbytery itself. The moderator is addressed as 'moderator' during meetings, but his/her position has no bearing outside of the presbytery meeting and affords him/her no special place in other courts, although typically the moderator (especially if a member of the clergy) will conduct worship and oversee ordinations and installations of ministers as a 'liturgical' bishop, and other ordinances which are seen as acts of the presbytery.

"The clerk takes minutes and deals with the correspondence of the presbytery, and is often appointed for an indefinite term. Presbytery Clerks are generally regarded as substantially influential due to their greater experience of the governance of the church and their ordering of the business of the presbytery. They are thus very much more than secretaries and often in fact are the lynch pin of the organisation.

"Presbyteries meet at a regularity between monthly and quarterly, some half-yearly."

["Presbyterian polity," wikipedia.org]

¹⁶¹"Predestination, in theology, is the doctrine that all events have been willed by God. John Calvin interpreted biblical predestination to mean that God willed eternal damnation for some people and salvation for others.^[1] Explanations of predestination often seek to address the so-called 'paradox of free will', whereby God's omniscience seems incompatible with human free will. In this usage, predestination can be regarded as a form of religious determinism; and usually predeterminism." ["Predestination," wikipedia.org]

efforts to reform it theologically and structurally, Zwingli and Calvin soon split with Luther over a number of issues such as the Lord's Supper, Worship patterns, the role of the Old Testament (Law & Gospel issues) etc. Their movement in Zurich and Geneva came to be known as the Reformed Church, although Lutherans pejoratively labelled it Calvinism. By the end of the sixteenth century the Reformed Church label came largely to designate churches following the general teachings of Calvin.¹⁶⁴ The traditional "Three Forms of Unity" (Drie formulieren van Enigheid) remain still as the unifying documents of this rather diverse set of churches. This label of Reformed tradition came to be distinguished somewhat from the Dutch Reformed Church tradition that emerged in the Netherlands. Somewhat unique on the European continent, it became the primary launch pad for the spread of Calvinism to the British Isles and then to North America. But in the British Isles the movement took on the label Presbyterianism, particularly in Scotland and Ireland. In England the label Puritan came to identify the tradition, although this term could include more than just the Calvinists. Then with Scottish and Irish immigration to North America along with the Dutch, both labels emerged there and remain distinct from one another still today, although this distinction is more as an identifying label of origins than of major differences in doctrine and church practice.

- **Synod:** Typically in a Calvinist church linked either to Presbyterianism or the Reformed Church tradition, governance begins with a council of elders in the local congregation, moves to the Presbytery regionally, and then in larger groups to a Synod in a larger region, and culminates in the General Assembly or General Synod. The extent of authority and limits of decision making at each of these levels will vary with the different groups inside the

tradition. Normally Presbyters or elders make up the representation in each of these levels beyond the local congregation.

- **TULIP:** This acronym stands for a basic set of doctrinal contentions that distinguish Calvinists, and especially hyper-Calvinists, from other churches. The label stands for:¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵“The central assertion of these points is that God saves every person upon whom he has mercy, and that his efforts are not frustrated by the unrighteousness or inability of humans.

- **‘Total depravity,’** also called ‘total inability,’ asserts that as a consequence of the fall of man into sin, every person is enslaved to sin. People are not by nature inclined to love God but rather to serve their own interests and to reject the rule of God. Thus, all people by their own faculties are morally unable to choose to follow God and be saved because they are unwilling to do so out of the necessity of their own natures. (The term ‘total’ in this context refers to sin affecting every part of a person, not that every person is as evil as they could be).^[35] This doctrine is derived from Augustine’s explanation of Original Sin.^[36] While the phrases ‘totally depraved’ and ‘utterly perverse’ were used by Calvin, what was meant was the inability to save oneself from sin rather than being absent of goodness. Phrases like ‘total depravity’ cannot be found in the Canons of Dort, and the Canons as well as later Reformed orthodox theologians arguably offer a more moderate view of the nature of fallen humanity than Calvin.^[37]

- **‘Unconditional election’** asserts that God has chosen from eternity those whom he will bring to himself not based on foreseen virtue, merit, or faith in those people; rather, his choice is unconditionally grounded in his mercy alone. God has chosen from eternity to extend mercy to those he has chosen and to withhold mercy from those not chosen. Those chosen receive salvation through Christ alone. Those not chosen receive the just wrath that is warranted for their sins against God.^[38]

- **‘Limited atonement,’** also called ‘particular redemption’ or ‘definite atonement’, asserts that Jesus’ substitutionary atonement was definite and certain in its purpose and in what it accomplished. This implies that only the sins of the elect were atoned for by Jesus’ death. Calvinists do not believe, however, that the atonement is limited in its value or power, but rather that the atonement is limited in the sense that it is intended for some and not all. Some Calvinists have quipped, ‘The atonement is sufficient for all and efficient for the elect,’^[39] while other Calvinists find such wording confusing rather than helpful. All Calvinists would affirm that the blood of Christ was sufficient to pay for every single human being IF it were God’s intention to save every single human being. But Calvinists are also quick to point out that Jesus did not spill a drop of blood in vain (Galatians 2:21), and therefore, we can only be sure that His blood sufficed for those for whom it was intended, however many (Matthew 26:28) or few (Matthew 7:14) that may be. Some Calvinists also teach that the atonement accomplished certain benefits for all mankind, albeit, not their eternal salvation.^[40] The doctrine is driven by the Calvinistic concept of the sovereignty of God in salvation and their understanding of the nature of the atonement. At the Synod of Dort, both sides agreed that the atonement of Christ’s death was sufficient to pay for all sin and that it was only efficacious for some (it only actually saved some). The controversy centered on whether this limited efficacy was based on God’s election (the view of the Synod and of later Reformed theologians) or on the choice of each person and God’s foreknowledge of that choice (the view of Arminius).^[41]

- **‘Irresistible grace,’** also called ‘efficacious grace’, asserts

¹⁶⁴“A continental Reformed church is a Calvinist church which has its origin in the European continent. The term is used to distinguish these churches from Presbyterian or other Calvinistic churches which have their origin in the British Isles. Sometimes these churches are referred to simply as Reformed, usually when the term is used in juxtaposition to Presbyterian, even though Presbyterians and other Calvinist churches are commonly referred to as Reformed. They are descended from the Swiss Reformation inaugurated by Huldrych Zwingli but developed more coherently by Martin Bucer, Heinrich Bullinger and especially John Calvin. In the 16th century, the movement spread to most of Europe, aligning with national governments in most cases, though several of these national or specific language-based churches later expanded to worldwide denominations.” [“Continental Reformed church,” wikipedia.org]

T = Total depravity

U = Unconditional election

L = Limited atonement

I = Irresistible grace

P = Perseverance of the saints

Some contend that these five points of Calvinism summarize the Canons of Dort, but historically no action connection exists between them.¹⁶⁶

Many other terms could be included in such a list as above, but these seem to be more common and distinct to this religious movement.¹⁶⁷

that the saving grace of God is effectually applied to those whom he has determined to save (that is, the elect) and overcomes their resistance to obeying the call of the gospel, bringing them to a saving faith. This means that when God sovereignly purposes to save someone, that individual certainly will be saved. The doctrine holds that this purposeful influence of God's Holy Spirit cannot be resisted, but that the Holy Spirit, 'graciously causes the elect sinner to cooperate, to believe, to repent, to come freely and willingly to Christ.'¹⁴² This is not to deny the fact that the Spirit's outward call (through the proclamation of the Gospel) can be, and often is, rejected by sinners; rather, it's that inward call which cannot be rejected. In fact, every saved person can testify how, at some point in their life, they 'felt overwhelmingly compelled' to believe on Christ, as if they 'had no choice but to follow Him.' This is what is meant by the effectual calling of God.

• **'Perseverance of the saints'** (or perseverance of God with the saints) (the word 'saints' is used to refer to all who are set apart by God, and not of those who are exceptionally holy, canonized, or in heaven) asserts that since God is sovereign and his will cannot be frustrated by humans or anything else, those whom God has called into communion with himself will continue in faith until the end. Those who apparently fall away either never had true faith to begin with (1 John 2:19), or, if they are saved but not presently walking in the Spirit, they will be divinely chastened (Hebrews 12:5-11) and will repent (1 John 3:6-9).¹⁴³

[["Calvinism," wikipedia.org](#)]

¹⁶⁶Most objections to and attacks on Calvinism focus on the 'five points of Calvinism,' also called the doctrines of grace, and remembered by the mnemonic 'TULIP.'¹³⁰ The five points are popularly said to summarize the Canons of Dort,¹³¹ however there is no historical relationship between them, and some scholars argue that their language distorts the meaning of the Canons, Calvin's theology, and the theology of 17th-century Calvinistic orthodoxy, particularly in the language of total depravity and limited atonement.¹³² The five points were popularized in the 1963 booklet *The Five Points of Calvinism Defined, Defended, Documented* by David N. Steele and Curtis C. Thomas. The origin of the five points and the acronym is unknown, but the earliest printed appearance of the T-U-L-I-P acronym is in Loraine Boettner's book, "The Reformed Doctrine Of Predestination" © 1932.¹³³ The acronym was very cautiously if ever used by Calvinist apologists and theologians before the booklet by Steele and Thomas.¹³⁴ [["Calvinism," wikipedia.org](#)]

¹⁶⁷For some more extensive listings, see the following:

- "Glossary of terms related to Calvinism," *Baptist Press* at <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=22972>
- Michael S. Horton, *For Calvinism*
- "Glossary of Calvinist Terms" at examiningcalvinism.com.
- "Calvinism and S. Baptists: a look at a heavily debated issue," BRnow.org.

B. Distinctive Traits

Three primary areas contribute significantly to the distinctiveness of both Presbyterians and the Reformed tradition, especially in the United States. But one must never overlook the enormous diversity within both these traditions with some connection to Calvin. Added to the mixture are the non-Presbyterian and non-Reformed churches who have adopted significant elements of this tradition in their doctrinal affirmations and perhaps also in their church governance.

1. Governance¹⁶⁸ This has to do with how a congregation is organized particularly by its structure of leadership¹⁶⁹. Additionally the concept extends beyond the local congregation to larger units of denominational organization to which the congregation belongs.

Structures of governance in Christianity center around three models: episcopal, presbyterian, and congregational. None of these models originates during the first century apostolic era.¹⁷⁰ Rather, they are products of

¹⁶⁸The roots of Presbyterianism lie in the European Reformation of the 16th century, with the example of John Calvin's Geneva being particularly influential. Most Reformed churches who trace their history back to Scotland are either presbyterian or congregationalist in government. In the twentieth century, some Presbyterians played an important role in the Ecumenical Movement, including the World Council of Churches. Many Presbyterian denominations have found ways of working together with other Reformed denominations and Christians of other traditions, especially in the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Some Presbyterian churches have entered into unions with other churches, such as Congregationalists, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Methodists." [["Presbyterianism," wikipedia.org](#)]

¹⁶⁹Church government (or sometimes church polity) is that branch of ecclesiology (study of the church) that addresses the organizational structure and hierarchy of the church. There are basically three types of church government that have developed in the various Christian denominations: the episcopal, the presbyterian, and the congregational." [["Church government," theopedia.com](#)]

¹⁷⁰No such thing as a biblical model of ecclesiology exists, despite repeated claims down through the centuries. Publications advocating some particular model stand as text book examples of phony proof texting of scripture by reading one's own culturally pre-determined model back into the scripture text and then falsely claiming that it is *the* 'biblical model.'

During the apostolic era of the first century 'congregations' sometimes labeled ἐκκλησία, were made up locally of a cluster of house church groups (cf. Rom. 16 for listing) meeting in private homes in a city and the surrounding region. A collective rather individualistic mindset lies behind the use of this Greek term. The combined groups seldom if ever came together in one assembled gathering. This is the major difference between then and now. The atmosphere in most places of the first century was hostile to Christians, thus making a large gathering exceedingly dangerous, plus Christians possessed no buildings of their own for meeting places. The Jewish synagogues were off limits, as well as the public assembly places in most ancient cities, such as the theater. Each of these house church groups, made up of a dozen or more participants, was under the leadership of πρεσβύτεροι and possibly διάκονοι (cf. Phil. 1:1). The existence of these two groups of leaders varied enormously-

later history with huge influences from the surrounding culture. The episcopal signals some type of “top down”

ly both geographically and temporally. Widely diverse patterns are clearly evident inside the New Testament, as well as early Christian writings.

One should note that the leadership terms *πρεσβύτεροι*, *διάκονοι*, *ἐπίσκοπος*, *ποιμήν*, *ἀπόστολος* et als. were not terms exclusive to Christians. They were widely employed as Jewish leadership terms, especially in the synagogues, and also as Greco-Roman social and political leadership terms. The composite picture from careful study of such terms across the social spectrum is that no group in the ancient world gave great attention to highly structured organizational development. The optimal principle was functionality: develop whatever loosely defined structures that the group needs to do its work. Additionally personality dynamics played a large role on group leadership patterns.

During the first two decades of Christianity -- approximately AD 30 - 50 -- when Christianity centered in Jerusalem, the general leadership of all these Christian groups was provided by the apostles. After the persecution of the early 50s (cf. Acts 12), the role of the apostles changed to a more regional leadership by example and from respect by the believers. They possessed no ‘ecclesiastical authority’ to enforce their will on any of the congregations. This expanded the role of local congregational leaders. The primary writings of Paul in the 50s through the early 60s that touch on this come when Christianity is rapidly expanding into the Gentile world and the Jewish model of synagogue structures that had served as examples to this point no longer were adequate.

Thus individual house church leadership increasingly became defined as a twofold structure of *πρεσβύτεροι* and possibly *διάκονοι* as Paul’s captivity and pastoral letters reflect. These local leaders collectively worked together in a city and its immediate region to coordinate and cooperate in the spreading of the Gospel and the training of believers in the Christian faith. As Acts 15 reflects about Jerusalem in the late 40s, often one of these leaders would emerge as a ‘leader of the leaders,’ as was the case with James.

Beyond a local cluster of house churches no regional or wider ‘ecclesiastical authority’ existed in the first century. As long as the apostles were still living they exerted considerable influence regionally but possessed no ecclesiastical power to enforce their will on local groups. This becomes increasingly evident in the second half of the first century with growing numbers of ‘splinter’ groups emerging with doctrines etc. in tension with those of the apostles. The letters in the New Testament bear clear witness to this trend. What held the faithful groups together was not a regional ‘bishop’ but common agreement on the content of the Gospel preached by the apostles under commissioning by Christ. Thus the apostolic Gospel became the unifying standard.

This twofold pattern of local leadership prevailed during the second half of the first Christian century with its variations and developments. Only in the second century with the emergence of the doctrine of sacramentalism did the structures change. This was driven both by doctrine and by the immersion of Christianity into the Greco-Roman cultural world in substantial abandonment of its Jewish heritage and roots. This later period marks the beginnings of the episcopal structure of church government including both local congregations and geographical regions. The doctrine of sacramentalism mostly dictated this shift.

Thus the only legitimate ‘biblical ecclesiology’ is limited to general statements of organizing principles of fairness, functionality etc. about whatever organizational structure is being discussed in a modern setting. Christians in today’s world do not function in their gatherings and organizational ways similar to that of first century Christians. They can’t duplicate such an ancient structure because their world is significantly different from that world.

leadership structure from a central authority such as the pope for Roman Catholics. The presbyterian model signals a “representative” leadership model usually where the elders of a congregation make the basic decisions both for the congregation and then through representation on the regional presbytery and ultimately through the synod or general assembly.¹⁷¹ The congregational model is a “bottom up” structure of democratic decision making where members of the congregation make the decisions of the congregation in business sessions.

Inside the Calvinistic traditions one finds mostly the presbyterian model, although some elements of the congregational model exist among a few of these groups.¹⁷² In the beginning, one of the convictions that Zwingli and Calvin agreed with Luther on was a rejection of the episcopal model of leadership. Basic to the Protestant Reformation was a rejection of the authority of the pope.¹⁷³ But the move to a presbyterian model

¹⁷¹One specific variation of this is within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Note the following description taken from the “*Handbook for Elders in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*” on church polity:

The polity (the form of government) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is unique among the various polities of other denominations. Within a particular congregation, the pastor is just one among many serving on the local governing body, the session. The next higher governing body is the presbytery which generally encompasses a limited geographical area with an average of about 66 churches. The representatives to the presbytery include the ministers generally within its borders that are members (clergy are not members of the local churches) and an equal number of laypersons (elders) representing the local churches. The next higher governing body is the synod which encompasses a larger geographical area, sometimes several states. Again there is equal representation between ministers and laypersons (elders). The highest governing body is the General Assembly which again is composed of equal numbers of ministers and laypersons (elders). Each governing body from the session through the General Assembly has responsibilities. In general, above the local level the governing bodies are charged with accomplishing things that apply to its region that the next lower governing body is not able to do. For example, the presbytery is to develop programs that affect its region, programs that a local congregation would be unable to sustain. The unique aspect of this polity is the significant representation of laypersons in the governing bodies above the local level.

¹⁷²Somewhat typical is the following statement from the Reformed Church in America:

The Reformed Church has a presbyterian polity where authority is divided among representative bodies: consistories, classes, regional synods, and the General Synod. The General Synod meets annually and is the representative body of the entire Church, establishing its policies, programs, and agenda.

[“Reformed Church in America, wikipedia.org”]

¹⁷³That this sentiment continued for several centuries afterwards is reflected in article 25, paragraph 6, of the Westminster Confession of Faith adopted in 1646 in England and used still to today by many groups with Calvinistic leanings:

There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ.^[13] Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself, in the Church, against Christ and all that is called God.^[14]
[Westminster Confession of Faith, article 25]

depended entirely on church / state relationships. In Switzerland shared governance of church life between church leaders and government officials gave distinctive twists to how the Reformed Church was organized and functioned. A perpetual tug of war over who dominates whom typifies the pattern here for the first three hundred or so years. Most of the time the tension lay between local government in each Swiss canon and the Reformed synod for that canon.¹⁷⁴

But elsewhere in Europe -- mainly Holland -- and the British Isles where the Reformed Church did not have official state church status, church governance took on different variations of the presbyterian structure.

The Dutch Reformed Church (1571 to 2004) is the oldest and original organized Protestant church in the Netherlands.¹⁷⁵ Although it functioned in a *privileged church* status, it never was an official state church of the country. But cooperation between church leaders particularly at the synod level and government authorities has been close until recent times. The Synod of Emden (in Germany) in 1571 officially began the church but the Synod of Dort in 1618 is considered to have been the defining meeting that gave permanent structure to the Reformed church both in the Netherlands and beyond. A product of the controversy over the Dutch professor Jacob Arminius, out of it came the Canons of Dort defining the five points of Calvinism.¹⁷⁶ Twelve Remonstrant

¹⁷⁴Some of these tensions centered in the areas of church discipline, appointment of local church ministers etc. Whether synod leaders or government officials had final authority in these areas was the heart of the tension.

This was a continuing struggle for Calvin at Geneva. His *Articles concernant l'organisation de l'église et du culte à Genève* (Articles on the Organization of the Church and its Worship at Geneva) first presented and adopted by the Geneva city council in January 1537 led to his being banned from the city by November of the same year. But he returned in September of 1541 and the city council accepted his *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) in November of that year. But again tensions over divisions of authority led to the government taking back much of its authority by March of 1543. Calvin's unfortunate involvement in the execution of Michael Servetus in 1553 only served to heighten negative attitudes about church officials having too much influence, even though Calvin achieved popular esteem as a defender of the faith. From the middle 1550s until his death in 1564 he dominated the city council of Geneva and the dominating power tilted toward church officials. But immediately after his death, the government authorities began reclaiming much of the power they had surrendered to Calvin during his later years.

¹⁷⁵In 2004, it merged with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands to form the *Protestant Church in the Netherlands*.

¹⁷⁶"Today, the Canons of Dort form part of the Three Forms of Unity, one of the confessional standards of many of the Reformed churches around the world, including the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, and North America. Their continued use as a standard still forms an unbridgeable problem preventing close cooperation between the followers of Jacob Arminius, the Remonstrants, and Dutch Reformed Churches.

"These canons are in actuality a judicial decision on the doc-

ministers supporting Arminius refused to sign the Acts of Cessation at the States-General assembly on July 5, 1619, and were thus banned by the government from the country as "disturbers of the public peace." Arminianism was condemned as heresy and consequently the political statesmen Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, who had been the protector of the Remonstrants, was condemned and then beheaded on May 13, 1619. Another supporter Hugo Grotius was given a life sentence in prison, but managed to escape the Netherlands with the help of his wife. The Belgic Confession adopted in 1618 laid out the church polity that has become standardized among the different groups in this movement.¹⁷⁷

In the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, the most definitive expression of church polity comes out of the adjunct document to the Westminster Confession of Faith that is titled "The Form of Presbyterial Church Government." This was adopted on February 15, 1645.¹⁷⁸ This

trinal points in dispute from the Arminian controversy of that day. Following the death of Arminius (1560–1609), his followers set forth a Remonstrance (published in 1610) in five articles formulating their points of departure from the stricter Calvinism of the Belgic Confession. The Canons are the judgment of the Synod against this Remonstrance.^[2] Regardless, Arminian theology later received official acceptance by the State and has since continued in various forms within Protestantism.

"The Canons were not intended to be a comprehensive explanation of Reformed doctrine, but only an exposition on the five points of doctrine in dispute. The five points of Calvinism, remembered by the mnemonic "TULIP" and popularized by a 1963 booklet^[3] are popularly said to summarize the Canons of Dort.^[4] However there is no historical relationship between them, and some scholars argue that their language distorts the meaning of the Canons.^[5]"

[“Canons of Dort,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁷⁷The Belgic Confession, one of the three forms of unity, adopted in 1618 defines local church organization as the following:

We believe that this true Church ought to be ruled and governed according to the spiritual order that God has instructed us with His Word, so that there would be Pastors and Ministers in it who purely preach and administer the Sacraments. Likewise, there should be Elders and Deacons who compose the Senate of the Church, so that just as by these means true Religion can be preserved, true doctrine retained and propagated, and people given over to sin censored and corrected, and also, just as they can be restrained with the same bridle of discipline, so also are the poor and afflicted can be assisted with help and comfort according to their particular need.

For then all things will be done duly and in good order, when faithful and pious men are elected to its government according to the prescription of blessed Paul, which is held in Tim. 3 and Tit. 1.

[Belgic Confession, article 30, "About Control of the Church"]

¹⁷⁸Its table of contents are as follows:

The Contents

The Preface.
Of the Church.
Of the Officers of the Church.
Pastors.
Other Church-governors.
Deacons.
Of particular Congregations.
Of the Officers of a particular Congregation.

however took quite some time before being implemented in the Church of Scotland.¹⁷⁹ The controversy cen-

- Of the Ordinances in a particular Congregation.
- Of Church-government, and the several sorts of Assemblies for the same.
- Of the power in common of all these Assemblies.
- Of Congregational Assemblies, that is, the Meeting of the ruling Officers of a particular Congregation, for the government thereof.
- Of Classical Assemblies.
- Of Synodical Assemblies.
- Of Ordination of Ministers.
- Touching the Doctrine of Ordination.
- Touching the Power of Ordination.
- Concerning the Doctrinal Part of the Ordination of Ministers.
- The Directory for the Ordination of Ministers.

[The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government at reformed.org]

¹⁷⁹“While the Church of Scotland traces its roots back to the earliest Christians in Scotland, its identity was principally shaped by the Scottish Reformation of 1560. At that point, the church in Scotland broke with Rome, in a process of Protestant reform led, among others, by John Knox. It reformed its doctrines and government, drawing on the principles of John Calvin which Knox had been exposed to while living in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1560, the Scottish Parliament abolished papal jurisdiction and approved Calvin’s Confession of Faith, but did not accept many of the principles laid out in Knox’s *First Book of Discipline*, which argued, among other things, that all of the assets of the old church should pass to the new. The *1560 Reformation Settlement* was not ratified by the crown for some years, and the question of church government also remained unresolved. In 1572 the acts of 1560 were finally approved by the young James VI, but the *Concordat of Leith* also allowed the crown to appoint bishops with the church’s approval. John Knox himself had no clear views on the office of bishop, preferring to see them renamed as ‘superintendents’; but in response to the new Concordat a Presbyterian party emerged headed by Andrew Melville, the author of the *Second Book of Discipline*.

“Melville and his supporters enjoyed some temporary successes—most notably in the *Golden Act of 1592*, which gave parliamentary approval to Presbyterian courts. King James VI believed that Presbyterianism was incompatible with monarchy, declaring ‘No bishop, no king’^[2] and by skillful manipulation of both church and state, steadily reintroduced parliamentary and then diocesan episcopacy. By the time he died in 1625, the Church of Scotland had a full panel of bishops and archbishops. General Assemblies met only at times and places approved by the crown.

“Charles I inherited a settlement in Scotland based on a balanced compromise between Calvinist doctrine and episcopal practice. Lacking the political judgement of his father, he began to upset this by moving into more dangerous areas. Disapproving of the ‘plainness’ of the Scottish service he sought to introduce the kind of High Church practice in use in England. The centre piece of this new strategy was the *Prayer Book of 1637*. Although this was devised by a panel of Scottish bishops, Charles’ insistence that it be drawn up in secret and adopted sight unseen led to widespread discontent. When the Prayer Book was finally introduced at St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh in mid-1637 it caused an outbreak of rioting, which spread across Scotland. In early 1638 the National Covenant was signed by large numbers of Scots, protesting at the introduction of the Prayer Book and other liturgical innovations that had not first been tested and approved by free Parliaments and General Assemblies of the Church. In November 1638, the General Assembly in Glasgow, the first to meet for twenty years, not only declared the Prayer Book unlawful, but went on to abolish the office of bishop itself. The Church of Scotland was then established on a Presbyter-

REFORMED TRADITION ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

General Synod / General Assembly
The final governing authority of the member churches

Synod:
Where numerous presbyteries exist the synod is the lower governing authority below the general assembly over regions

Presbytery:
The regional governing authority beyond the local congregation.

Session / Consistory
The local church governing authority made up of the elders of the congregation.



tered around both an episcopal vs. presbyterian form of church government and was compounded by tensions between church leaders and government leaders over how much authority the civil government could exercise over church matters. This tension was not finally resolved until the Church of Scotland Act 1921 passed by the British Parliament.¹⁸⁰ This led to a merger of most of rian basis. Charles’ attempt at resistance to these developments led to the outbreak of the Bishops’ Wars. In the ensuing civil wars, the Scots Covenanters at one point made common cause with the English parliamentarians – resulting in the Westminster Confession of Faith being agreed by both. This document remains the subordinate standard of the Church of Scotland, but was replaced in England after the Restoration.

“Episcopacy was reintroduced to Scotland after the Restoration, the cause of considerable discontent, especially in the south-west of the country, where the Presbyterian tradition was strongest. The modern situation largely dates from 1690, when after the Glorious Revolution the majority of Scottish bishops were non-jurors, and in response Presbyterian government was guaranteed by law, excluding what became the Scottish Episcopal Church.

“Controversy still surrounded the relationship between the Church of Scotland’s independence and the civil law of Scotland. The interference of civil courts with Church decisions, particularly over the right to appoint ministers, led to a number of groups seceding. This began with the secession of 1733 and culminated in the Disruption of 1843, when a large portion of the Church broke away to form the Free Church of Scotland. The seceding groups tended to divide and reunite among themselves – leading to a proliferation of Presbyterian denominations in Scotland.

[“Church of Scotland,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸⁰“The British Parliament passed the Church of Scotland Act

the Presbyterian churches in Scotland into the present Church of Scotland. Some independent Scottish Presbyterian churches remain outside the official church.¹⁸¹ But the Presbyterian form of church governance now prevails among the various groups in Scotland.

In North America, the history is very different. After the American Revolutionary War, issues of church governance became completely internal matters inside the various synods and without civil governmental interference. The Canadian experience took on different contours due to its governmental structures along the lines of the British empire.

In the new colonies, the Reformed Church in America began its existence at New Amsterdam (now New York City) in 1628. It was the official church of the colony and functioned under the authority of the *classis* of Amsterdam in Holland. This authority from Holland extended until 1754 with permission from Holland for it to form its own independent presbytery. But controversy plagued the church until a formal constitution was adopted in 1792 and the first general synod which took place in 1794.¹⁸² Growth and controversy follow during

1921, finally recognising the full independence of the Church in matters spiritual, and as a result of this, and passage of the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Act, 1925, the Kirk was able to unite with the United Free Church of Scotland in 1929. The United Free Church of Scotland was itself the product of the union of the former United Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the majority of the Free Church of Scotland in 1900.”

[“Church of Scotland,” wikipedia.org]

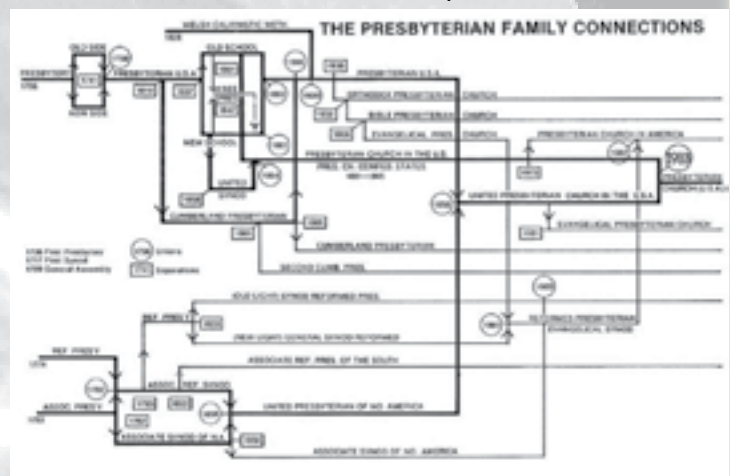
¹⁸¹“Some independent Scottish Presbyterian denominations still remain. These include the Free Church of Scotland -sometimes called ‘The Wee Frees’ - (formed of those congregations which refused to unite with the United Presbyterian Church in 1900), the United Free Church of Scotland (formed of congregations which refused to unite with the Church of Scotland in 1929), the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (which broke from the Free Church of Scotland in 1893), the Associated Presbyterian Churches (which emerged as a result of a split in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the 1980s) and the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (which emerged from a split in the Free Church of Scotland in 2000).” [“Church of Scotland,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸²“The Dutch-speaking community prospered in the former New Netherlands as farmers and traders, dominating New York City, the Hudson Valley and parts of New Jersey and maintaining a significant presence in southeastern Pennsylvania, southwestern Connecticut, and Long Island.

“In the early 18th century, nearly 3,000 Palatine German refugees came to New York. Most worked first in English camps along the Hudson River to pay off their passage (paid by Queen Anne’s government) before they were allowed land in the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys. There they created numerous German-speaking Lutheran and Reformed churches, such as those at Fort Herkimer and German Flatts. They used German as the language in their churches and schools for nearly 100 years and recruited some of their ministers from Germany. By the early 20th century, most of their churches had joined the RCA.^[2]

“During the American Revolution a bitter internal struggle broke out in the Dutch church, with lines of division which followed ecclesiastical battles that had gone on for twenty years between the ‘coetus’ and ‘conferentie’ factions. One source indicates

the 1800s and 1900s with the 1857 Secession leading to the formation of the more conservative Christian Reformed Church in North America, centered largely in the mid-western part of the US. Both groups follow the Canons of Dort in their patterns of presbyterian church governance. And both groups have churches in Canada as well, e.g., the membership of the CRCNA is approximate 75% US and 25% Canadian. In the past couple of decades both groups are experiencing substantial declines in members with the CRCNA losing some 20% of its membership, while the RCA has experience a loss of over one third of its membership.



On the Presbyterian side of the Calvinist movement in the US, Philadelphia was the starting point in 1706 when the Presbytery of Philadelphia was established. In 1717 the Synod of Philadelphia was formed with three presbyteries, and became the basis for the Synod of the Trinity which today is the upper judiciary of the Presbyterian Church (USA). This name was adopted in 1983 out of a succession of mergers and today it contains sixteen presbyteries.

But the history of Presbyterianism in the US is littered with controversies and splits much in the same manner as among the Reformed Churches in the US.

that defections may have occurred as early as 1737. ‘Desolation pervaded many of the churches, whereas prior to 1737 good order was maintained in the churches, and peace and a good degree of prosperity were enjoyed. ...But in 1754, the Coetus of the previous year, having recommended the changing of the Coetus into a Classis with full powers, the opposition became violent, and the opponents were known as the Conferentie.’^[3] A spirit of amnesty made possible the church’s survival after the war. The divisiveness was also healed when the church immersed itself in an intensive foreign missions program in the early 19th century.

“In 1792, a formal constitution was adopted; in 1794 the Reformed Church held its first general synod; and in 1867 formally adopted the name ‘Reformed Church in America’. In the nineteenth century, in New York and New Jersey, the descendants of the original Dutch settlers struggled to preserve their European standards and traditions while developing a taste for revivalism and an American identity.”

[“Reformed Church in America,” wikipedia.org]

Consequently as the above chart just for Presbyterian churches illustrates, a huge number of Reformed / Presbyterian synods or churches can be found in the US today.

Although governance among them will vary somewhat, most all will adhere to the presbyterian structure of church organization with individual variations.

One should note that at the local congregational level the leadership of the congregation is made up of elders and deacons. The duties of deacons varies from group to group.¹⁸³ The elders of the church are divided into two separate groups: **the teaching elder**, who is the minister / pastor / bishop of the congregation, and **the ruling elders**, the laity who have the responsibility for governing the congregation.¹⁸⁴ This latter group have most of the decision making responsibility. In general this model is what one finds in both Presbyterian and Reformed churches.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³“The office of deacon has different meanings among different presbyterian churches. In some churches, deacons exercise responsibility for practical matters of finance and fabric, either separately or together with the elders. In some cases deacons administer the welfare matters of the congregation, while a separate board of management or trustees administers the other material business of the congregation, such as its endowments, salaries and buildings.” [“Presbyterian Polity,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸⁴“There are two types of elder; the teaching elder (see The Minister below) and the ruling elder. An excerpt from Miller (1831) expands this.^[5]

In every Church completely organized, that is, furnished with all the officers which Christ has instituted and which are necessary for carrying into full effect the laws of his kingdom, there ought to be three classes of officers, viz: at least one Teaching Elder, Bishop, or Pastor — a bench of Ruling Elders — and Deacons. The first to “minister in the Word and Doctrine”, and to dispense the sacraments; — the second to assist in the inspection and government of the Church; — and the third to “serve tables”; that is, to take care of the Church’s funds destined for the support of the poor, and sometimes to manage whatever relates to the temporal support of the gospel and its ministers.

“Depending upon the specific denomination, teaching elders may also be referred to with terms such as ‘minister of Word and Sacraments’.^[6]

“The elders are persons chosen from among the congregation and ordained for this service. Beyond that, practices vary: sometimes elders are elected by the congregation,^[7] sometimes appointed by the session, in some denominations elders serve for life, others have fixed terms, and some churches appoint elders on a rotation from among willing members in good standing in the church. However in many churches, ruling elders retain their ordination for life, even though they serve fixed terms. Even after the end of their terms, they may be active in presbyteries or other bodies, and may serve communion.^[8]

“In addition to sitting on the session and other church courts, ruling elders have duties as individuals. Again, Miller (1831) explains,^[9]

It is their duty to have an eye of inspection and care over all the members of the congregation; and, for this purpose, to cultivate a universal and intimate acquaintance, as far as may be, with every family in the flock of which they are made “overseers”.
[“Presbyterian Polity,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸⁵“Reformed church government is known by the word Presbyterian, ‘presbyter’ being the Greek word for elder. In other words,

2. Doctrine. The belief systems of Reformed and Presbyterian churches are similar to virtually all other mainline Protestant denominational groups. The Apostle’s Creed forms a foundational starting point. The distinctives of this tradition have developed over time since their beginnings in the early 1500s. Usually the shifts and expansions reflect cultural influences at various periods of history as well as some geographical influences.¹⁸⁶

Initial sixteenth century doctrinal issues in Calvinism. One of the measures for determining distinctives is the debates conducted by Calvin with others in his life time.¹⁸⁷ The things that set both Zwingli and Calvin¹⁸⁸ apart from both the Vatican and Martin Lu-

Reformed church government is elder-centred church government. 1 Timothy 5:17 speaks of two kinds of elders (known to us as the ‘minister’ and the ‘elder’), [insert: **highly questionable conclusion**] but the one does not have more authority than the other. (Characteristic of Reformed church polity is not the minister but the elder). Therefore let the elders speak up at Consistory meetings and Synods, let not the ministers make the decisions! At the same time, let the young men in the congregation prepare themselves for the office. God doesn’t ask for a fluent speaker, a good reader, a university degree. All God asks for is men who are faithful to Him, who love Him, His Church and His work.” [“A Historical Overview of Church Government,” Free Reformed Church of Kemscott]

¹⁸⁶Often articles about Calvinism wrongly limit the doctrinal distinctives to the so-called “five points of Calvinism.” Additionally, the TULIP acronym developed only in the twentieth century is falsely assumed to define these five points as found in Calvin’s teaching and formulated officially in the Canons of Dort in the early 1600s. The impact of scholasticism on Calvinist thinking in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries significantly re-defined the meaning of these ideas from their early expressions. Calvinism much more inclusive and diverse than just these five points. What it means to believe as a Calvinist undergoes significant changes over time and in different parts of the world.

¹⁸⁷“Calvin’s theology was not without controversy. Pierre Caroli, a Protestant minister in Lausanne accused Calvin as well as Viret and Farel of Arianism in 1536. Calvin defended his beliefs on the Trinity in *Confessio de Trinitate propter calumnias P. Caroli*.^[30] In 1551 Jérôme-Hermès Bolsec, a physician in Geneva, attacked Calvin’s doctrine of predestination and accused him of making God the author of sin. Bolsec was banished from the city, and after Calvin’s death, he wrote a biography which severely maligned Calvin’s character.^[31] In the following year, Joachim Westphal, a Gnesio-Lutheran pastor in Hamburg, condemned Calvin and Zwingli as heretics in denying the eucharistic doctrine of the union of Christ’s body with the elements. Calvin’s *Defensio sanae et orthodoxae doctrinae de sacramentis* (A Defence of the Sober and Orthodox Doctrine of the Sacrament) was his response in 1555.^[32] In 1556 Justus Velsius, a Dutch dissident, held a public disputation with Calvin during his visit to Frankfurt, in which Velsius defended free will against Calvin’s doctrine of predestination. Following the execution of Servetus, a close associate of Calvin, Sebastian Castellio, broke with him on the issue of the treatment of heretics. In Castellio’s *Treatise on Heretics* (1554), he argued for a focus on Christ’s moral teachings in place of the vanity of theology,^[33] and he afterward developed a theory of tolerance based on biblical principles.^[34] [“Theology of John Calvin,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁸⁸For understanding Calvin’s beliefs, one must turn to the pri-

humanity to choose and thus to stand accountable to God for sinfulness, even though sin had enslaved humanity and robbed people of their will to choose God. He will speak of faith but wrongly interpret it in light the church fathers as intellectual knowledge of God, rather than the biblical principle of unconditional volitional surrender to Christ.¹⁹² Calvin seems to have taught that Christ died for the sins of all humanity, rather than just for the sins of the elect, as later teachers of Calvinism asserted.¹⁹³

Seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. The successors of Zwingli and Calvin by the beginning of the 1600s begin to reshape the Reformed tradition to fit the needs of a rapidly changing European world where the Italian Renaissance world was evolving into the Age of Enlightenment with Rationalism looming on the horizon. The Renaissance Humanism that shaped Calvin and many others in the 1500s, which was positive in its attitude toward religion, was now turning anti-religious in orientation with the religious wars over Europe in the first half of the 1600s. In this developing atmosphere theological statements take on significantly different nuances of meaning and the language of declaration changes its nuanced meaning greatly.

Christian thinking was heavily impacted by this which falls under the label of Scholasticism.¹⁹⁴ Because

nal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.” [Institutes of the Christian Religion, ccel.org, Bk. 3, Chap. 21, Par. 5]

¹⁹²“He first defines faith as the firm and certain knowledge of God in Christ.” [“Theology of John Calvin,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁹³“R. T. Kendall has argued that Calvin’s view of the atonement differs from that of later Calvinists, especially the Puritans. Kendall interpreted Calvin as believing that Christ died for all people, but intercedes only for the elect.

“Kendall’s thesis has been disputed by Paul Helm, who argues that ‘both Calvin and the Puritans taught that Christ died for the elect and intercedes for the elect.’^{[14]”}

[“Theology of John Calvin,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁹⁴“Scholasticism is a method of critical thought which dominated teaching by the academics (‘scholastics,’ or ‘schoolmen’) of medieval universities in Europe from about 1100–1700, and a program of employing that method in articulating and defending dogma in an increasingly pluralistic context. It originated as an outgrowth of, and a departure from, Christian monastic schools at the earliest European universities.^[1] The first institutions in the West to be considered universities were established in Italy, France, Spain and England in the late 11th and the 12th centuries for the study of arts, law, medicine, and theology,^[2] such as the University of Salerno, the University of Bologna, and the University of Paris. It is difficult to define the date at which they became true universities, although the lists of studia generalia for higher education in Europe held by the Catholic Church and its various religious orders are a useful guide.

“Not so much a philosophy or a theology as a method of learning, scholasticism places a strong emphasis on dialectical reasoning to extend knowledge by inference, and to resolve contradictions. Scholastic thought is also known for rigorous conceptual analysis and the careful drawing of distinctions. In the classroom and in

of the high emphasis upon education in the Reformed tradition, scholasticism had a substantial impact in reshaping the theological perspective of most of the leaders.¹⁹⁵ To be sure Calvin was influenced by this new way of thinking even while criticizing it among the Catholic scholars.¹⁹⁶

But the third and fourth generations of Calvinistic teachers reflect much more than Calvin the growing impact of scholastic thinking on theological expression. This thinking found formal expression in the various writing, it often takes the form of explicit disputation: a topic drawn from the tradition is broached in the form of a question, opponents’ responses are given, a counterproposal is argued and opponent’s arguments rebutted. Because of its emphasis on rigorous dialectical method, scholasticism was eventually applied to many other fields of study.

“As a program, scholasticism began as an attempt at harmonization on the part of medieval Christian thinkers: to harmonize the various authorities of their own tradition, and to reconcile Christian theology with classical and late antiquity philosophy, especially that of Aristotle but also of Neoplatonism.^[3] (See also Christian apologetics.)

“Some of the main figures of scholasticism include Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Abelard, Alexander of Hales, Albertus Magnus, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas’s masterwork *Summa Theologica*, considered to be the pinnacle of scholastic, medieval, and Christian philosophy,^[4] began while Aquinas was regent master at the *studium provinciale* of Santa Sabina in Rome, the forerunner of the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Angelicum*. Important work in the scholastic tradition has been carried on well past Aquinas’s time, for instance by Francisco Suárez and Luis de Molina, and also among Lutheran and Reformed thinkers.”

[“Scholasticism,” wikipedia.org]

¹⁹⁵A very helpful treatment of this is “Reformed scholasticism,” wikipedia.org. The history discussion is divided into 1) John Calvin (1509-1564); 2) early orthodoxy (1560-1620); high orthodoxy (1620-1700); late orthodoxy (1700-1790).

The more significant figures after Calvin are listed as Wilhelm à Brakel; John Owen; Francis Turretin; Peter Martyr Vermigli; Gisbertus Voetius; Hermann Witsius; Johannes Wollebius; Girolamo Zanchi.

¹⁹⁶“John Calvin, unlike other early reformers such as Martin Luther, was not formally trained in theology but in law. Like many early reformers, however, he was influenced by Renaissance humanism, which led to an interest in the original meaning of biblical and patristic texts and criticism of medieval scholastics for straying from this meaning in favor of philosophical distinctions. Analysis of his work, however, shows that he found himself using some of the same distinctions employed by the scholastics, and some of the criticisms he made of scholastic theology may have actually been based on his own misunderstanding. It is clear, however, that Calvin’s use of scholastic theology is different in that while medieval scholastic theology was solely employed by professional theologians in the schools, rather than by ordinary clergy in preaching, Calvin saw theological teaching as one of the primary objectives of the church and intended his theological works to be used by preachers and common people. Many of his criticisms of purely speculative scholastic theology may be seen as a consequence of his desire to make theology accessible and useful for the church rather than solely for professional theologians in the schools.^{[6]”} [“Reformed scholasticism,” wikipedia.org]

creeds etc. coming in the late 1500s into the early 1600s, including the Heidelberg Confession of 1563, the Belgic Confession of 1561, the French Gallican Confession of 1569 which formed the early expressions.¹⁹⁷ Contributing also to this trend was the establishment of the Genevan Academy in 1559 by Calvin for training prospective preachers in the Reformed tradition. The impact of the Counter Reformation by the Catholics in the late 1500s helped push Protestant theological expression into the scholastic mould as its response to the highly scholastic formulation of the Catholic denunciation of Protestant teaching.

Highly significant was the controversy in the Netherlands over the teachings of Prof. Jacob Arminius, known as the Arminian controversy in the early 1600s. Out of this came the Remonstrants arguing against predestination in highly scholastic terms in support of Arminius. The Calvinistic reaction as formulated by the

¹⁹⁷“Though scholasticism can already be seen in early Reformed theologians, especially Vermigli and to some degree Calvin, it became much more prevalent during the third and fourth generations of Reformed theologians as a tool to institutionalize the faith by codifying it in confessions and works of systematic theology, as well as to combat the growing sophistication of counter-Reformation polemicists.^[7] Reformed confessions of faith such as the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 (commissioned by Elector Frederick III of the Palatinate), the Belgic Confession of 1561, and the French Gallican Confession of 1559 served as boundary markers for the new faith and as starting places for theological development.^[8] The formation of the Genevan Academy in 1559 also enabled Reformed theologians to receive extensive academic training and participate in the wider academic theological discourse, and served as a model for other Reformed institutions of higher learning throughout Europe.^[9] Counter-Reformation attacks from Roman Catholic writers such as Jesuit Cardinal Robert Bellarmine were written in the tradition of scholasticism, and needed to be answered in kind. Reformed theologians such as Heidelberg professors Zacharias Ursinus and Girolamo Zanchi adopted the tools of scholastic theology such as the quaestio method to rigorously exposit the Reformed confessions.^[10]

“The early 17th-century Arminian controversy, in which a group known as the Remonstrants argued that predestination to salvation is based on God foreseeing a person’s faith, brought about the Synod of Dort which defined the Reformed doctrine on this matter in greater detail.^[11] The 1594 treatise by Huguenot theologian Franciscus Junius On True Theology was the first Protestant work to distinguish archetypal theology (God’s knowledge of himself) and ectypal theology (our knowledge of God based on his condescending revelation to us).^[12] This distinction, which has its roots in the medieval Scottish distinction between theology in itself (theologia in se) and our theology (theologia nostra), limits the degree to which God can be known by sinful man and became very important in later Reformed and Lutheran theology.^[13]

“Through the influence of refugees from continental Europe such as Martin Bucer and Peter Martyr Vermigli, late 16th-century English theology was predominately Reformed in nature, though Arminianism gained dominance after 1700. Puritans William Perkins and William Ames were important figures in Reformed English theology during this period. Reformed theologians at the University of St. Andrews assured Calvinism’s hold on Scotland.^[14]”

[“Reformed Scholasticism,” wikipedia.org]

Synod of Dort pushed the expression of Reformed theology further into scholastic language and structure. The resulting Canons of Dort still stand as one of the Three Forms of Unity in the Reformed tradition, along with the Heidelberg Confession and the Belgic Confession. The highly scholastic and judicial tones of the language of these documents reflect this. Central to the Canons of Dort and the Arminian controversy are the five points of Calvinism. Expressed in judicial language more than theological language, these are calculated to reject the criticisms of Arminius of these five central points of Reformed teaching on total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints. The chart below provides some understanding by means of a comparison between these three major streams of theological tradition, but it is limited to the so-called five points of Calvinism. These perspectives, while still existing today, stood in sharper contrast in the 1600s and 1700s than today.

When a broader comparison is made between Calvinism and even these two other streams of Christian Protestant tradition, one would discover a large number of items in common, which tend to outweigh these points of sometime sharp distinction. The chart is provided in order to highlight the differences on these five points that are so often used to highlight the differences of Calvinism from the remainder of Protestant Christianity.

One helpful point here is the distinction drawn between monergism and synergism.¹⁹⁸

Topic	Calvinism	Lutheranism	Arminianism
Human Will	Total depravity without free will permanently due to divine sovereignty	Total depravity without free will until spiritual regeneration	Depravity does not prevent free will

¹⁹⁸“Monergism describes the position in Christian theology of those who believe that God, through the Holy Spirit, works to bring about effectually the salvation of individuals through spiritual regeneration without cooperation from the individual. Monergism is most often associated with Calvinism (like Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed) and its doctrine of irresistible grace and in particular with historic doctrinal differences between Calvinism on the one hand and Arminianism on the other.” [“Monergism,” wikipedia.org]

“In theology, synergism is the position of those who hold that salvation involves some form of cooperation between divine grace and human freedom. It stands opposed to monergism, a doctrine most commonly associated with the Lutheran and Reformed Protestant traditions, whose soteriologies have been strongly influenced by the North African theologian Augustine of Hippo (AD 354 – 430).” [“Synergism,” wikipedia.org]

Topic	Calvinism	Lutheranism	Arminianism
Election	Unconditional election to salvation with those outside the elect foreordained to damnation (double-predestination)	Unconditional predestination to salvation for the elect	Conditional election in view of foreseen faith or unbelief
Justification	Justification is limited to those predestined to salvation, completed at Christ's death	Justification by faith alone, completed at Christ's death.	Justification made possible for all through Christ's death, but only completed upon choosing faith in Jesus
Conversion	Monergistic, through the inner calling of the Holy Spirit, irresistible	Monergistic, through the means of grace, resistible	Synergistic, resistible due to the common grace of free will
Preservation & apostasy	Perseverance of the saints: the eternally elect in Christ will necessarily persevere in faith	Falling away is possible, but God gives assurance of preservation.	Preservation is conditional upon continued faith in Christ; with the possibility of a final apostasy.

One must not forget that, from the late 1500s through the middle of the 1600s, religious conflict enveloped virtually all of western Europe. The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) left western Europe devastated and Christianity in chaos. It would take the better part of the next 150 years for any sense of recovery to happen. All this left a bitter taste about religion in the mouths of most Europeans and this would open the door for growing anti-religious trends that would have severe impact on Christianity.

One of the by-products of the debates in the Synod of Dort was the growing publication of systematic theologies by a variety of Reformed scholars. The tense atmosphere of the 1600s meant that most of these were produced in sharp criticism of alternative viewpoints both inside and outside Christianity.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹Following the Synod of Dort, which ended in 1619, the Reformed began to give greater definition and detail to their theological system by writing comprehensive systematic theologies.^[15] The period was also characterized by intense polemical writing against several groups. The Remonstrants, having been repudiated in the synod of Dort, became an independent movement with their own seminary and dogmatic textbooks, and the Reformed wrote against them with even greater intensity.^[16] Reformed polemics were also directed against the increasingly influential Socinians, who denied the Trinity and other traditional Christian doctrines.^[17] Early Socinians had already had some influence on the development of Remonstrantism during the early orthodox period.^[18] In addition, the rise of Cartesianism provided another target for Reformed scholastics such as Dutch theologian Gisbertus Voetius, who argued that Descartes's philosophical skepticism placed reason above revelation instead of subjecting reason to biblical revelation.^[19] ["Reformed Scholasticism," wikipedia.org]

One consequence of this was the surfacing of distinct and often hostile to one another streams of Reformed thinking. For example, in the Netherlands three distinct strands of Reformed theology emerged in the seventeenth century: *theologia traditiva*, school of Voetius, and the school of Johannes Cocceius.²⁰⁰ Sharp clashes between these three viewpoints surfaced over this period of time. In France, Moses Amyraut advocated a compromise position on predestination and free will in his work at the Academy of Saumur in a doctrine known as Amyraldism.²⁰¹ The Swiss based *Formula consensus ecclesiarum Helveticarum* was drawn up in 1675 to condemn Amyraldism.

In England, the Reformed teaching centered in those refusing to remain in the Anglican church who were known as Nonconformists. This label was particularly applicable after the English Act of Uniformity in 1662 mandating adherence to the teachings of the Church of England.²⁰² But the Act of Toleration in 1689 moderated

²⁰⁰In the Netherlands, three strands within Reformed orthodoxy may be distinguished, though all of these stayed within the boundaries provided by the Canons of Dort.^[20] The *theologia traditiva* was most notably represented by Samuel Maresius and Friedrich Spanheim the Elder and Younger. This strain was in many ways aligned with a second strain, the school of Voetius, but unlike the Voetians the followers of the *theologia traditiva* were infralapsarian, arguing that God's decree to create men and allow the Fall logically precedes the decree to elect some men to salvation. They also, contrary to the Voetians, approved of some degree of governmental involvement in church affairs, were more lax with respect to Sabbath observance, and were in general more moderate polemicists. Differences between these groups decreased throughout the 17th century, as they positioned themselves against a third strain, the Cocceians.^[21] The school of Johannes Cocceius (known as the Cocceians) differed from the Voetians and the rest of Reformed scholastic theology in teaching on the relationship of the Old and New Testament. The Cocceians taught that the Sabbath commandment (to rest one day in seven) was abrogated in the New Covenant, and had other disagreements regarding the relationship between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. Though Cocceius himself rejected Cartesianism, some of his followers were influenced by it and this led to even more suspicion of the Cocceians on behalf of the rest of the Reformed.^[22] ["Reformed Scholasticism," wikipedia.org]

²⁰¹In France, Moses Amyraut at the Academy of Saumur taught a doctrine known as Amyraldism which is considered a compromise between the doctrine of predestination presented at the Synod of Dort and that of Arminianism. Amyraut taught that God elects to salvation in two ways. First, the entire human race is elected to salvation on condition of their faith in him. Then, based on his foreknowledge that no one would have faith, God elects some to salvation in a second, particular election.^[23] Most Reformed scholastics rejected Amyraut's views, arguing that it was a return to Arminianism because the first decree of election was conditional on faith.^[24] The Swiss *Formula consensus Helvetica* was written primarily by Johann Heinrich Heidegger with help from Francis Turretin to repudiate Amyraldism.^[25] ["Reformed Scholasticism," wikipedia.org]

²⁰²This should not be confused with the Act of Uniformity 1558, which set the structure of the Church of England in breaking away

this to provide exemption for the Nonconformists who had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy to England. These groups -- Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers (founded in 1648) -- came to be labelled English Dissenters. But this toleration was only partial. For example, enrolment in the British universities required membership in the Church of England until 1828 when it was relaxed. Successive tugs of war between the Dissenters and the Anglican Church along with the government have continued to take place into the present time.²⁰³ Today the Dissenters of the early years are labelled Free Churches and enjoy relative freedom from government interference. What established early on some sense of uniformity to these dissenting English groups was the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1647. Some of these groups such as the Baptists only adopted limited elements of Calvinism into their belief systems. What especially distinguishes them from the continental Reformed tradition is their rejection of the synod form of church governance in favor of a congregational form with each local church retaining its autonomy.

When one compares the writings coming out of the 1600s and 1700s to the earlier expressions, the hardening of the categories inside the five points system is noticeable as one example. The controversies combined with scholasticism which was itself coming increasingly under the influence of rigid rationalism produced cold, often highly rationalistic doctrinal expressions of the same themes of Calvin and those around him in the 1500s.

The stagnation in the eighteenth century of the scholastic method pushed a shift towards exegetical and historical theological emphases. The Age of Reason came to the forefront of focus in western culture, which meant the dominance of reason over revelation for much of Christian thinking, including the Reformed tradition. Resulting approaches to biblical study such as

from Roman Catholicism.

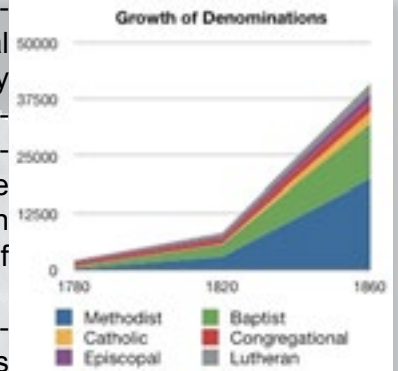
²⁰³“In England, Nonconformists were restricted from many spheres of public life and were ineligible for many forms of public educational and social benefits, until the repeal in 1828 of the Test and Corporation Acts in the nineteenth century and associated toleration. For example, attendance at an English university had required conformity to the Church of England before University College London (UCL) was founded, compelling Nonconformists to fund their own Dissenting Academies privately.

“The religious census of 1851 revealed that total Nonconformist attendance was very close to that of Anglicans.

“Nonconformists were further angered by the Education Act 1902 which integrated denominational schools into the state system and provided for their support from taxes. John Clifford formed the National Passive Resistance Committee and by 1906 over 170 Nonconformists had gone to prison for refusing to pay their school taxes. This included 60 Primitive Methodists, 48 Baptists, 40 Congregationalists and 15 Wesleyan Methodists.” [“Nonconformism,” wikipedia.org]

the early forms of historical criticism and natural theology proved highly controversial. Challenges to the scholastic Reformed tradition came from numerous sides in highly critical critiques of aspects of Calvinism.²⁰⁴

These trends continued through the 1800s in Europe and began making impact in North America. The first Great Awakening in the 1730s and 1740s in the colonies caused considerable controversy over the legitimacy of revivalism over against traditionalism and orthodoxy. Both Reformed and Presbyterian groups often split over the legitimacy of the revivalism emphasis,²⁰⁵ but many of these groups were hugely influenced by it.²⁰⁶ It had impact in parts of Europe as well with Pie-



²⁰⁴“In the Netherlands the “Green Cocceians” (named after Henricus Groenewegen, Groen = Green in Dutch) surpassed the Voetians who had been dominant in the 17th century. They attempted to find a mediating position between Enlightenment thought and Reformed theology, which resulted in intense controversy with other Reformed scholastics.^[30] Enlightenment thought was even more influential in Germany and England, leading to the rise of deism, biblical criticism, and rationalism at the expense of scholastic modes of thinking. John Gill defended the English particular Baptists, who taught the Reformed doctrine of limited atonement, from the influence of Arminianism and Socinianism and is considered one of the most important Reformed scholastics of the 18th century.^[31] Reformed scholastic theology was more dominant in Scotland. The Marrow Controversy, which began in 1718, was caused by disagreements between so-called the neonomians and antinomians over the relationship of the covenant of works and covenant of grace. The opposing sides often used scholastic distinctions and methods. The controversy ended with the split of the Church of Scotland and the establishment of the Associate Presbytery.^[32] In Switzerland the Enlightenment had a significant impact on the shape of Reformed theology. Jean Alphonse Turretin, son of high orthodox scholastic Francis Turretin, along with Jean-Frédéric Osterwald and Samuel Werenfels rejected the doctrine of predestination, the Synod of Dort, and the Helvetic Consensus.^[33] [“Reformed Scholasticism,” wikipedia.org]

²⁰⁵“The Calvinist denominations were especially affected. For example, Congregational churches in New England experienced 98 schisms, which in Connecticut also had impact on which group would be considered ‘official’ for tax purposes.^[16] These splits were between the New Lights (those who were influenced by the Great Awakening) and the Old Lights (those who were more traditional). It is estimated in New England that in the churches there were about 1/3 each of New Lights, Old Lights, and those who saw both sides as valid.^[17] [First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

²⁰⁶“The movement was a monumental event in New England that challenged established authority and incited rancor and division between old traditionalists who insisted on the continuing importance of ritual and doctrine, and the new revivalists, who encouraged emotional involvement and personal commitment. It had a major impact in reshaping the Congregational church, the Presbyterian church, the Dutch Reformed Church, and the German

tism emerging in Germany and Methodism in England as two examples.²⁰⁷

In the emerging United States, the Second Great Awakening (1790s - 1840s) impacted both the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, but not as much as Baptist and Methodist churches. Revivalism based on the older Camp Meeting format with Scottish Presbyterian roots spread especially into the frontier regions along the Appalachian Mountains southward and produced an explosion of new Christians and churches.²⁰⁸ One of the consequences of this revivalist movement was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Kentucky.²⁰⁹

Reformed denomination, and strengthened the small Baptist and Methodist Anglican denominations. It had little impact on most Anglicans or on Quakers.^[2] In some places it brought Christianity to African slaves.” [First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

²⁰⁷“The evangelical revival was international in scope, affecting predominantly Protestant countries of Europe. The emotional response of churchgoers in Bristol and London in 1737, and of the Kingswood colliers with white gutters on their cheeks caused by tears in 1739 under the preaching of George Whitefield,^[4] marked the start of the English awakening. Historian Sydney E. Ahlstrom sees it as part of a ‘great international Protestant upheaval’ that also created Pietism in Germany, the Evangelical Revival and Methodism in England.^[5] Revivalism, a critical component of the Great Awakening, actually began in the 1620s in Scotland among Presbyterians, and featured itinerant preachers.^[6]” [First Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

²⁰⁸“The Methodist circuit riders and local Baptist preachers made enormous gains; to a lesser extent the Presbyterians gained members, particularly with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in sparsely settled areas. As a result, the numerical strength of the Baptists and Methodists rose relative to that of the denominations dominant in the colonial period — the Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists. Among the new denominations that grew from the religious ferment of the Second Great Awakening are the Churches of Christ, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (nicknamed the Mormons), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the Evangelical Christian Church in Canada.^{[12][13]} The converts during the Second Great Awakening were predominantly female. A 1932 source estimated at least three female converts to every two male converts between 1798 to 1826. Young people (those under 25) also converted in greater numbers, and were the first to convert.^[14]” [“Second Great Awakening,” wikiS

pedia.org]

²⁰⁹One very critical by-product of the Second Great Awakening was the prominent role that women came to play in church life as a consequence of this spiritual renewal. A 1932 study estimated that between 1798 and 1826 for every two male converts there were three female converts. Additionally large numbers of young people under 25 came into Christianity through this movement, as well as a large number of Jewish men who actually made up the largest single group of converts during the awakening.

Although the large number of women converts did not transition into significant ministerial roles for women, it did bring them to the forefront of church life in other ways.

However, women took other public roles; for example, relaying testimonials about their conversion experience, or assisting sinners (both male and female) through the conversion process. Leaders such as Charles Finney saw women’s public prayer as a crucial aspect in preparing a community for revival and improving their efficacy in conversion.^[28] Women also took crucial roles in the conversion and religious upbringing of children. During the period of revival, mothers

The spiritual renewal movements changed a lot of lives of people, but did not produce well developed theological expressions in publications or in confessional statements of faith. However, coming out of this awakening was a passionate concern to evangelize the lost. The modern missions movement had its beginnings primarily with the British Baptist William Carey in 1780, although it was intensely opposed by the Calvinistic influences inside Baptist life in England.²¹⁰ The participation of churches inside the Reformed tradition was limited, and centered mostly in groups like Baptists who had only adopted some elements of Calvinistic teaching. Churches in the Arminian tradition became substantially more involved in both evangelization and missionary expansion both in North America and in the British

were seen as the moral and spiritual foundation of the family, and were thus tasked with instructing children in matters of religion and ethics.^[29]

The greatest change in women’s roles stemmed from participation in newly formalized missionary and reform societies. Women’s prayer groups were an early and socially acceptable form of women’s organization. Through their positions in these organizations, women gained influence outside of the private sphere.^{[30][31]}

Changing demographics of gender also affected religious doctrine. In an effort to give sermons that would resonate with the congregation, ministers stressed Christ’s humility and forgiveness, in what the historian Barbara Welter calls a “feminization” of Christianity.^[32] [“Second Great Awakening,” wikipedia.org]

²¹⁰“Around 1780, an indigent Baptist cobbler named William Carey began reading about James Cook’s Polynesian journeys. His interest grew to a furious sort of ‘backwards homesickness’, inspiring him to obtain Baptist orders, and eventually write his famous 1792 pamphlet, ‘An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of Heathen.’ Far from a dry book of theology, Carey’s work used the best available geographic and ethnographic data to map and count the number of people who had never heard the Gospel. It formed a movement that has grown with increasing speed from his day to the present.

“Carey’s example was followed by a number of missions to seaside and port cities. The China Inland Mission (later the Overseas Missionary Fellowship) is one of the more famous. In the Church of England, the Church Mission Society (CMS) was founded in 1799^[5] and went onto be active all around the world, including the Middle East. In the United States, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was chartered in 1812.

“Thomas Coke, (d. 1814) the first bishop of the American Methodists, has been called ‘the Father of Methodist Missions’. After spending time in the young American republic strengthening the infant Methodist Church alongside Episcopal colleague Francis Asbury, the British-born Coke left for mission work. During his time in America, Coke worked vigorously to increase Methodist support of Christian missions and raising up mission workers. Coke died while on a mission trip to India, but his legacy among Methodists - his passion for missions - continues.

“The next wave of missions, starting in the early 1850s, was to inland areas, led by Hudson Taylor with his China Inland Mission. Taylor was later supported by Henry Grattan Guinness who founded Cliff College which exists today for the purpose of training and equipping local and global mission.”

[“Mission (Christianity),” wikipedia.org]

Isles, and from there to the rest of the world.

Missionary expansion was promoted primarily by the establishment of missionary societies either inside church groups or across denominational lines. But the blossoming of this movement came in the 1900s despite the challenges presented by the Great Depression.²¹¹

Twentieth and Twenty-first centuries. Toward the end of the 1800s, the Reformed tradition churches both in Europe and North America were becoming caught up in the exploding theological controversies which gradually became labelled the modernist controversies. Modernism developed largely as a by-product of Romanticism in negative reaction to the Industrial Revolution with all its enormous social injustices and abuses of people. Modernism was an all inclusive movement impacting philosophy, artistry, religion, and most every other aspect of western cultural life. It gathered up in a single bundle most of the often conflicting dynamics of western culture that flourished beginning in the 1800s.²¹² Much of it was highly critical of organized Christianity with its vested interests in the state churches in Europe and the British Isles. In North America, the more liturgical oriented denominations including many of the Reformed tradition churches were negative targets as well.

Out of this cultural atmosphere came first in Europe and then later to North America the so-called liberal²¹³

²¹¹For a more detailed discussion see my chapter 4 “Preparing to be a Missionary,” in *THE APOSTLE PAUL: SERVANT OF CHRIST* at http://cranfordville.com/PaulStudyGuide/PaultheApostle_SG05_P2C04.pdf.

²¹²“The term Modernism describes the modernist movement in the arts, its set of cultural tendencies and associated cultural movements, originally arising from wide-scale and far-reaching changes to Western society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In particular the development of modern industrial societies and the rapid growth of cities, followed then by the horror of World War I, were among the factors that shaped Modernism. Modernism also rejects the lingering certainty of Enlightenment thinking, and many modernists rejected religious belief.”^{[2][3]}

“In general, the term Modernism encompasses the activities and output of those who felt the ‘traditional’ forms of art, architecture, literature, religious faith, social organization and daily life were becoming outdated in the new economic, social, and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialized world. The poet Ezra Pound’s 1934 injunction to ‘Make it new!’ was paradigmatic of the movement’s approach towards what it saw as the now obsolete culture of the past. All the same innovations, like the stream-of-consciousness novel, twelve-note music and abstract art, all had precursors in the 19th century.

[“Modernism,” wikipedia.org]

²¹³“Liberal Christianity, also known as liberal theology, is an umbrella term covering diverse, philosophically and biblically informed religious movements and ideas within Christianity from the late 18th century and onward. Liberal does not refer to Progressive Christianity or to the political philosophy, but to the philosophical and religious thought that developed as a consequence of the Enlightenment.” [“Liberal Christianity,” wikipedia.org]

verses conservative²¹⁴ controversies. Establishment Christianity identified itself with the governments which supported the emerging big businesses. The horrible abuses by the emerging corporations of their workers led to substantial disillusionment toward the state churches. Anti-religious sentiment flourished across Europe in the 1800s. This negative attitude coupled with rigid rationalistic trends in society produced the so-called ‘liberal’ religious segment both inside many of the state churches and to a greater degree in the ‘free churches’ and led to a focus of major attention on social justice and equality for all people.

Although addressing these social issues was motivated by different things, generally the Protestant principle of *sola scriptura* stood behind most of these motivations. For the so-called ‘classical liberals’ a rediscovery of Jesus as a Jewish peasant teacher who affirmed the importance of first century peasants to God led to the ‘historical Jesus’ emphasis that placed Christ square in opposition to the traditionalist orientation of most of the state churches. For the free churches such as the Brethern Church, Baptist churches, Methodist Church tremendous ministry focus was placed on educating and taking care of the physical and health needs of the working class people in Europe and their children.

In North America, these emphases on ministry to the poor took on a variety of contours that were driven by different motivations. Division of opinion over the ‘social gospel’ ruptured a lot of Protestantism in the late 1800s through the early 1900s. Both liberal and conservative church groups gave attention to the poor, but for different reasons. The conservatives with their heritage of revivalism sought to ‘save the souls’ of the poor through ministry to physical needs. The liberal churches tended to reach out to the poor to make a better life for these people without strong emphasis on a conversionism interest. Although within the Reformed traditions in the US, various groups would be found in both camps, the majority would have labelled themselves as ‘liberals’ in their ministry to the poor.

What gradually develops through the twentieth century especially is that the Reformed tradition comes increasingly to be found among the middle and wealthier classes of American society, while Baptists, Pentago-

²¹⁴Defining the term ‘conservative’ in a Christian setting is almost impossible because it means so many different things. On continental Europe the term is very close to ‘traditionalist,’ since the meaning centers on maintaining established traditions in worship structures and belief systems. In the British Isles it can designate ‘low church Anglicanism’ or some of the free church groups usually labeled as ‘evangelical.’ In the US, ‘conservative’ means many different things depending on which church groups one is referencing. The article “Conservative Christianity,” wikipedia.org highlights some of these challenges.

nals and others center on working class America as their base of membership. In the post World War II boom era in North America these groups that earlier centered on working class America began reaching out to the middle and upper class segments of American society. This in part was a by-product of the earlier educational emphasis coming out of the Second Great Awakening. Large numbers of colleges and universities with substantial academic standing were developed among many of these church groups. Particularly in the second half of the twentieth century most of these 'church schools' sought primarily to provide higher education opportunities to working class and middle class American young people.

Through the 1900s both the Reformed tradition schools, as well as the emerging 'evangelical' schools, found themselves caught up in theological controversies over belief and practice. The modernist controversies of the early 1900s evolved into the fundamentalist controversies from the 1930s on.

Among Presbyterians one of the better known eruptions was the "Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy" in the 1920s and 1930s centered in part at Princeton University in New Jersey and other Presbyterian schools.²¹⁵ Unfortunately, it laid the foundation for similar eruptions all across denominations during and following this period. This clash over emerging methods of Bible study, negativism about establishment Christianity, the increasingly dominant 'modern view' of life that had little need for traditional Christianity etc. came to a head at in the classrooms and the churches.

It was triggered in part by the arrival of biblical higher criticism being advocated in several seminaries in the US. An early controversial figure was Prof. Charles Briggs at Union Theological Seminary in New York in the 1880s and 1890s. Moves to revise the Westminster Confession of faith to accommodate these trends provoked severe reaction from more conservative Presbyterians. Heresy trials popped up all over the place that led to the 'de-frocking' of numerous Presbyterian clergymen. Added to the fray was the emergence of ecumenical interests by the progressive side of Presbyterians and others. This was heightened by America's involvement in World War I with the resulting social concerns and movements toward pacifism and peace. The main triggering mechanism for an all out split among Presbyterians was the sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists

²¹⁵"The Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy was a religious controversy in the 1920s and 30s within the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America that later created divisions in most American Christian denominations as well. The major American denomination was torn by conflict over the issues of theology and ecclesiology. Underneath those struggles lay profound concerns about the role of Christianity in the culture and how that role was to be expressed.^[1]" ["Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy," wikipedia.org]

Win?" by the then Baptist pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in New York City, Harry Emerson Fosdick, on May 21, 1922. Fosdick's emerging national radio broadcasts across the country gave the message national prominence along with massive republication in numerous journals and magazines. Voices of Presbyterian protest such as William Jennings Bryan, Charles Hodge at Princeton, etc. began condemning both evolution and high critical studies of the Bible as fostering a destructive liberalism in Christianity. In a series of battles over control of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA from the late 1800s through the 1920s, the conservatives steadily lost ground and influence among Presbyterians, because of a perceived narrow, often bigoted viewpoint that was out of touch with modern life.

Princeton Theological Seminary at the beginning of the twentieth century was one of a very few, if not the only, Old School²¹⁶ Presbyterian schools left that advocated traditional or Calvinistic Presbyterianism. But during the 1920s, progressive minded faculty was added and gradually came to dominate the seminary, which had been separated from the university in 1812 and placed under direct supervision of the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church USA, the main body of Presbyterians at the time. Controversy over J. Gresham Machen who was not highly trusted by either the conservatives or moderates, even though known as a conservative, plunged the seminary into a three year (1926-1929) struggle over directions that it would take. When the moderates gained the upper hand at the General Assembly of the church in 1929, Machen moved to set up the Westminster Theological Seminary, taking with him numerous conservative faculty from Princeton, including Robert Dick Wilson, and Oswald Thompson Allis. Named Westminster as a symbolic affirmation of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the school gradually emerged as a center of conservative Presbyterian teaching. Machen also founded in 1936 the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a synod independent of the other Presbyterian Churches and committed to the traditional Calvinistic teachings.

Doctrinal issues over the virgin birth, the inspiration of the Bible, the miracles of Jesus etc. stood at the

²¹⁶"In the second half of the 19th century, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America began to shift away from historic Presbyterian faith and practice. Earlier in the century (1838), there had been a split between 'Old School' and 'New School' lines, with the 'Old School' Presbyterians, perhaps being best represented by Charles Hodge, standing for a stricter stance on confessional subscription and church polity,^[1] and the 'New School' Presbyterians, including Lyman Beecher and Albert Barnes, believing that Presbyterians should take a more active role in social issues,^[2] often at the expense of maintaining strict Calvinist orthodoxy.^[3]" ["Orthodox Presbyterian Church," wikipedia.org]

heart of the division theologically. Of course, these were not exclusively Presbyterian beliefs but are held in common with most all Protestant groups. Added to this was the 'New School' progressive tendency toward softening the strict Calvinistic doctrinal stances, especially on the traditional five points. This was vigorously resisted by the conservatives. The emerging Fundamentalist Movement including conservatives among Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and others provided an alternative across denominational networking structure for the Presbyterian conservatives dissatisfied with the directions of the major synods in the US.²¹⁷ This new version of ecumenical activity stood in stark contrast to the earlier ecumenical trends fostered in the National Council of Churches where Christian unity tended to push doctrinal distinctives into the background as of secondary importance for the sake of unity.

Where does the Reformed tradition stand at the beginning of the twenty-first century? The reforming of Protestantism increasingly into conservative and liberal camps in the late 1900s has defined Christianity in North America as much along these two opposing perspectives as along traditional denominational stances. For the conservative side, doctrinal purity looms heavy on the scene, while on the liberal side Christian unity is the driving force. One of the by products has been the diminishing of denominational identity either formally or doctrinally in the past few decades. Whether one is a Presbyterian or Reformed Church member is of lessor importance than whether one is conservative or liberal (as viewed mostly from the conservative perspective). In Europe where the Reformed tradition is often vested in a state church, such as the Reformerte Kirche in Germany, the emphasis is stronger toward Christian unity and the diminished roles of the Reformed synods.²¹⁸ Spiritual resurgence in Christianity in both Europe and North America is now primarily taking place among Evangelicals with a strong sense of evangelism and mission commitments outside the state churches. Reformed tradition churches represent a mixed bag of participation in this on both sides of the Atlantic.

But in the present cultural setting, this resurgence places little emphasis on heavy doctrinal formulation beyond the very basics of Christianity in general such as the Apostle's Creed. Traditional denominational

²¹⁷The publication of *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth* in a series of some 90 essays from 1910 to 1915 served to define the movement early on. Conservative Presbyterians played an important role here.

²¹⁸In Germany, for example, where the Reformerte Kirche and the Lutheranische Kirche combine as the Evangelische Kirche more and more emphasis is placed on the Evangelische Kirche with less interest in the particular branch of Reformed or Lutheran. This becomes increasingly the concern with the plummeting membership roles of the Evangelische Kirche across the country over the past several decades.

governance structures and creedal confessions have a minimal influence. How long it will be before these trends begin to change requires a knowledge of the future that I don't possess. If the emerging trends in the so-called southern hemisphere, developing nations toward a national Christian church without either Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox orientation begins to impact the northern hemisphere as well, then the future lies in a completely 'denominationalless' Christianity for both North America and Europe. What that might look like is anybody's guess! The only certainty is that it will bear no resemblance to the so-called 'non-denominational' churches in existence today, which form actual denominations functionally while not formally.²¹⁹

3. Worship and Sacraments.²²⁰ Perhaps one of the more visible distinctives of the Reformed tradition, especially in its beginning decades, is at the point of structures of worship and the role of the Lord's Supper in worship.

Zwingli pioneered many of the radical departures from the traditional Catholic liturgy of the time with his use of a liturgy labelled *Prone* from late medieval Catholic tradition.²²¹ Martin Bucer at Strasbourg and

²¹⁹What role the newly emerging 'international churches' might play in this is beyond my expertise to understand. These are based on pluralism and multiculturalism, while the national church idea moves along completely different lines.

²²⁰"The regulative principle of worship is a teaching shared by some Calvinists and Anabaptists on how the Bible orders public worship. The substance of the doctrine regarding worship is that God institutes in the Scriptures everything he requires for worship in the Church and that everything else is prohibited. As the regulative principle is reflected in Calvin's own thought, it is driven by his evident antipathy toward the Roman Catholic Church and its worship practices, and it associates musical instruments with icons, which he considered violations of the Ten Commandments' prohibition of graven images.^[48]

"On this basis, many early Calvinists also eschewed musical instruments and advocated a capella exclusive psalmody in worship,^[49] though Calvin himself allowed other scriptural songs as well as psalms,^[48] and this practice typified presbyterian worship and the worship of other Reformed churches for some time. The original Lord's Day service designed by John Calvin was a highly liturgical service with the Creed, Alms, Confession and Absolution, the Lord's supper, Doxologies, prayers, Psalms being sung, the Lords prayer being sung, Benedictions.^[50]

"Since the 19th century, however, some of the Reformed churches have modified their understanding of the regulative principle and make use of musical instruments, believing that Calvin and his early followers went beyond the biblical requirements^[48] and that such things are circumstances of worship requiring biblically-rooted wisdom, rather than an explicit command. Despite the protestations of those who hold to a strict view of the regulative principle, today hymns and musical instruments are in common use, as are contemporary worship music styles and worship bands.^[51]"

[“Calvinism,” wikipedia.org]

²²¹ “Huldrych Zwingli, who began his reforming work in Zurich in 1518, introduced many radical changes to worship. His Sun-

John Oecolampadius in Basel further modified the patterns of worship limiting it so a simple form including only preaching, almsgiving, the Eucharist, and prayer.²²²

William Farel had already begun the reshaping of worship prior to Calvin's arrival in Geneva in 1536. Calvin continued the trend set by Farel.²²³ Rather quickly Geneva became the basic model for Reformed worship structures all over continental Europe, and beyond.²²⁴

day service starting in 1519 was apparently derived from a liturgy called Prone, a late Medieval service which was sometimes held before, during, or after mass. It contained the Lord's Prayer, a Hail Mary, a sermon, a remembrance of those who had died the previous week, another Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary, the Apostle's Creed, the Decalogue, confession, and absolution.^[11] ["Reformed worship," wikipedia.org]

²²²“Martin Bucer, the reformer of Strasbourg, believed that proper worship must be conducted in obedience to the Bible, and for this reason he sought to eliminate many of the dramatic ceremonies which were part of the liturgy of the church. He limited worship to preaching, almsgiving, the Eucharist, and prayer. John Oecolampadius, in Basel, believed that while the Bible did not give detailed liturgical instruction, all worship must be guided by biblical principles. For him this meant that worship should be simple and unpretentious.^[12]” ["Reformed worship," wikipedia.org]

²²³“John Calvin's ideas about worship were influenced Martin Bucer and William Farel during his time in Strasbourg beginning in 1538.^[1] When he came to Geneva in 1536, Farel had already begun a Zwinglian reformation.^[4] His liturgy emphasized the unworthiness of the worshiper with the Ten Commandments being sung every Sunday, a practice probably taken from Martin Bucer. The service was also very didactic, with even the prayers written with the intention to instruct.^[5] Calvin did not insist on having explicit biblical precedents for every element of worship, but looked to the early church as his model and retained whatever he considered edifying.^[6] The liturgy was entirely in the vernacular, and the people were to participate in the prayers.^[7]” ["Reformed worship," wikipedia.org]

²²⁴“Calvin's Geneva became the model for all continental Reformed worship, and by the end of the sixteenth century a fixed liturgy was being used by all Reformed churches.^[8] Dutch Reformed churches developed an order of worship in refugee churches in England and Germany which was ratified at synods in Dordrecht in 1574 and 1578. The form emphasizes self-examination between the words of institution and communion consisting of accepting the misery of one's sin, assurance of mercy, and turning away those who are unrepentant.^[9]”

“The 1552 Book of Common Prayer was influenced by Reformed thinking through Scottish reformer John Knox's insistence on including what became known as the black rubric, a declaration that kneeling at the Eucharist did not imply adoration. Knox also wrote a liturgy for the newly founded Church of Scotland based on John Calvin's liturgy.^[10] Knox's liturgy set a structure for worship in Scotland, though ministers could improvise. Following to the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the English made several attempts to impose the Book of Common Prayer on the Scots, which they fiercely resisted.^[11]”

“Following their return from exile in Geneva during the reign of Queen Mary I and King Philip, English Protestants known as Puritans (who remained within the Church of England) and separatists (who separated from it) began to attempt to introduce some of the more radical reforms they had experienced in Geneva into the worship of the Church of England, and in some ways to go beyond them.^[12] They sought to rid worship of any element not specifically prescribed in the Bible, though they disagreed on the practical im-

lications of this. They also favored liturgical decisions to be made at the lowest level possible, rather than by a regional or national authority.^[13]”

“Reformed worship,” wikipedia.org

²²⁵“In supporting Calvin's proposals for reforms, the council of Geneva passed the *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances) on 20 November 1541. The ordinances defined four orders of ministerial function: pastors to preach and to administer the sacraments; doctors to instruct believers in the faith; elders to provide discipline; and deacons to care for the poor and needy.^[33] They also called for the creation of the Consistoire (Consistory), an ecclesiastical court composed of the lay elders and the ministers. The city government retained the power to summon persons before the court, and the Consistory could judge only ecclesiastical matters having no civil jurisdiction. Originally, the court had the power to mete out sentences, with excommunication as its most severe penalty. However, the government contested this power and on 19 March 1543 the council decided that all sentencing would be carried out by the government.^[34]” ["John Calvin," wikipedia.org]

²²⁶“Rather than preaching on the appointed gospel, as was the common practice at the time Zwingli preached through consecutive books of the Bible,^[1] a practice known as *lectio continua* which he learned from reading the sermons of John Chrysostom.^[22] John Oecolampadius preached from the Hebrew text rather than the Latin, though most theologians during the time often could not even read Greek.^[23] In Strasbourg, Martin Bucer and its other preachers also preached *lectio continua*. There, catechetical preaching took place every Sunday afternoon, so that the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the sacraments were explained every year. This practice was also instituted in Wittenburg, Zurich, Basel, and Constance.^[24] Calvin preferred to conduct the entire service from the pulpit, and pulpits became prominent features in Reformed churches.^[6]”

In the establishment of a new identity for the churches of Switzerland, that distinguished them from their Roman Catholic predecessor, was in how worship was conducted. Calvin had an easier time getting his *La Forme des Prières et Chants Ecclésiastiques* (The Form of Prayers and Church Hymns) adopted by the Geneva council, than he did with his *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (Ecclesiastical Ordinances). The latter was passed on November 20, 1541 only to be quickly revised with extensive modifications.²²⁵ During 1542 in addition to *La Forme des Prières et Chants Ecclésiastiques*, he also published *Catéchisme de l'Eglise de Genève*. These early publications helped establish not just church governance in Switzerland but also structures of worship. Approaches to preaching also underwent substantial changes with Zwingli and the other reformers in Switzerland.²²⁶

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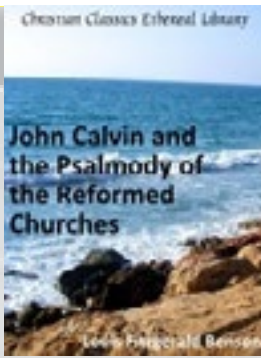
“Reformed worship,” wikipedia.org

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“Reformed worship,” wikipedia.org

that prevailed in the Reformed tradition.²²⁷

Calvin developed a distinctive Reformed pattern that set it apart from both the Catholic tradition and the other reformational patterns, especially those in Lutheranism. In a 1909 publication, Louis P. Benson develops a critique of this Calvinistic distinctive in his *John Calvin and the Psalmody of the Reformed Churches*. Although elements common to both the Catholic and other Protestant traditions are



²²⁷“Music in worship was abolished altogether by Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich in 1523 based on a belief that the Bible did not allow for it and that physical means could not lead to spiritual edification.^[26]

“The Reformed church in Strasbourg, under the leadership of Martin Bucer, followed the example of Martin Luther by instituting congregational singing to replace the monastic choirs currently in use and produced many psalms and hymns for this purpose. The *Strasbourg German Service Book* of 1525 was the first attempt at a Reformed liturgical book. It included several metrical psalms, including some written by Luther. Early on, the biblical Psalms were used almost exclusively by the Strasbourgers. Successive editions of the *Strasbourg Psalter* contained increasing numbers of psalms.²⁷ In Constance, where Johannes Zwick and the Blarer brothers led, hymns as well as psalms were used, with the *Constance Hymn Book* of 1540 being divided evenly between hymns and psalms. In 1537, the Strasbourgers also began to include original hymns in their Psalter.^[28]

“John Calvin began work on the *Genevan Psalter* in the French language in 1538. This psalter contained translations by poets such as Clément Marot and tunes written by composers such as Claude Goudimel and Louis Bourgeois. It consisted almost exclusively of psalms, and exclusive psalmody became the dominant practice among the Reformed for the next 200 years.^[29] Psalms were to be sung in unison by the congregation, though harmony was permitted in private.^[30]

“Singing a Psalm in unison was a standard practice before and after the sermon in all Reformed churches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with Zurich ending their prohibition on church music in 1598. A leader sang each line with the congregation repeating. Organs were forbidden, though trumpets were gradually introduced.^[25] Works like the 1562 English *Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter* were very popular among the Reformed. Literal translations of the Psalms began to be preferred by the Reformed over the looser translations of the Genevan and Sternhold and Hopkins psalters in the latter part of the sixteenth century.^[31] Some of the most influential psalters of the seventeenth century were the *Scottish Psalter* of 1635 and the *Bay Psalm Book* of 1640, which was the first book printed in America.^[32]

“Isaac Watts, an early eighteenth-century English Congregationalist minister, translated psalms much more freely than his predecessors. Some complained that his psalms were not translations at all, but paraphrases. Watts also wrote many hymns, many of which imitated the psalms. The rise of pietism in the eighteenth century led to an even greater dominance of hymns.^[33]

“Hymnody became acceptable for Presbyterians around the middle of the nineteenth century, though the Reformed Presbyterians continue to insist on exclusive a capella psalmody. The use of organs and choirs also became acceptable in Reformed churches during the nineteenth century, even in Zurich.^[34]

[“Reformed worship,” wikipedia.org]

present, Calvin developed the Calvinistic tradition of congregational singing of scripture texts in the vernacular language re-written in metrical structure for musical presentation. This went well beyond the established traditions of using the Psalms as music for public worship.

The doctrinal aspect of this centered in the understood meaning of the Lord’s Supper.²²⁸ All the reformers rejected vigorously the Roman Catholic teaching of the Eucharist changing the elements of the bread and the wine into the actual body and blood of Christ upon the blessing of the officiating priest. Luther remained closer to the Catholic view with assertions of the elements being the actual body and blood, while Zwingli insisted upon a purely symbolical role for the elements. Calvin did not go as far as Zwingli,²²⁹ but went further away from the Catholic view with his “spiritual presence of Christ” in the elements viewpoint.²³⁰

²²⁸Calvin did agree with the other reformers in only two sacraments in Christianity: baptism and the Lord’s Supper, in opposition to the Catholic sevenfold set of sacraments. Baptism for Calvin was, however, infant baptism justified unbiblically under the contrived umbrella of covenant theology. Here Calvin -- and Luther -- did not break with the Catholic tradition regarding infant baptism. Their views stood in severe opposition to the believer’s baptism advocated by the Anabaptist opponents of the time.

The radical reformers called “Anabaptists” insisted upon a “rebaptism” as believers.^[5] That restored some of the original meaning of baptism from the primitive New Testament context. The Anabaptists believed that becoming a Christian disciple was a radical step of separation from one’s past that required in baptism an act of high symbolism before the Christian community. Anabaptists stand historically just before Baptists.^[2]

[“Believer’s Baptism,” Theopedia.org]

²²⁹Calvin took a mediating position between Luther and Zwingli regarding the Eucharist. He held that Christ’s body and blood are spiritually (rather than physically, as Luther insisted) conveyed to those who partake in faith.^[40] The people sat or knelt at a table to take communion.^[41] Calvin wished to have the Eucharist celebrated each Sunday, but was not allowed by the city council. Instead, it was celebrated every quarter, with an intense period of self-examination by the people beforehand.^[42] The determination of worthiness to receive the Eucharist was to be based upon trust in God alone for forgiveness of sin, repentance, and reconciliation with others, and the consistory was to keep watch to prevent flagrant, unrepentant offenders from partaking. Exclusion from the Eucharist was normally intended to be temporary, until the offender repented.^[43] In Reformed churches throughout continental Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Eucharist was celebrated on feast days, and parishioners were expected to dress in a dignified manner. Common bread was used rather than unleavened sacramental bread.^[44]

[“Reformed worship,” wikipedia.org]

²³⁰“He completely rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and the treatment of the Supper as a sacrifice. He also could not accept the Lutheran doctrine of sacramental union in which Christ was ‘in, with and under’ the elements. His own view was close to Zwingli’s symbolic view, but it was not identical. Rather than holding a purely symbolic view, Calvin noted that with the participation of the Holy Spirit, faith was nourished and strengthened by the sacrament. In his words, the eucharistic rite was ‘a

Thus worship in the Reformed tradition developed and retained several distinctives that provided a clear visual distinction for this tradition from the emerging alternatives, as well as the clear distinction from Catholic patterns of worship.

III. Psychological and Sociological Impact on the Reformed Church Movement

Although doctrine and religious practice are major sources of individual identity to every religious oriented movement, another very significant aspect to identity is the way the movement attracts certain personalities and how it develops itself sociologically in various cultural settings. These culturally based traits become as deeply engrained into the 'soul' of the religious movement as do the religious teachings and practices. In many instances, the sociological and psychological influences do more to shape the movement than do the religious aspects. Thus a deeper understanding of the religious movement must give some attention to these traits as well.²³¹

A central question to be asked from this perspective is simply: What kind of person is attracted to the Reformed tradition?²³² Although difficult to answer, the question nonetheless opens the door to looking at social profiles of the types of individuals who become a part of this religious tradition over the history of the movement. This in turn connects up to a further area of probing: how the movement has then influenced the society or societies that it has existed in, more in terms of daily life than by the 'big events' of formal history concerns.

The appeal of the Reformed tradition takes on different contours depending on both the historical and the geographical setting being examined.

Where the Reformed Church is either the state church, such as Switzerland or Scotland, or a part of

secret too sublime for my mind to understand or words to express. I experience it rather than understand it.¹⁹³ ["John Calvin," wiki] pedia.org]

²³¹What I am offering here is but a modest summary rather than a detailed, technical assessment of the Reformed tradition. Such a study is needed but should be done by trained experts in the field of the Sociology of Religion with much greater skills than I possess.

²³²To be clear, what is being put on the table generally falls under the category of 'social history' in the newer definitions of the term:

The "new social history" exploded on the scene in the 1960s, quickly becoming one of the dominant styles of historiography in the U.S., Britain and Canada. The French version, promulgated by the Annales School, was very well organized and dominated French historiography, and influenced much of Europe and Latin America. Jürgen Kocka finds two meanings to "social history." At the simplest level, it was the subdivision of historiography that focused on social structures and processes. In this regard it stood in contrast to political or economic history. The second meaning was broader, and the Germans called it "Gesellschaftsgeschichte." It is the history of an entire society from a social-historical viewpoint.⁶¹

["Social history," wikipedia.org]

the state church, such as Germany, the appeal of the church tradition comes mostly out of it being considered the standard or official definition of Christianity. Here participation in a Reformed Church means largely loyalty to your government or country, and is the expected thing for most of the citizens. Early on from the 1500s through the 1700s this was not only expected, but often mandated by governmental decrees. The treaties of Osnabrück and Münster, part of the wider Peace of Westphalia brought an end to the Thirty Years' War in 1648, but not an end to the religious wrangling over which version of Christianity would dominate Europe. Mandatory membership in the church of the regional ruler decided official Christianity in the various regions. It would take well beyond the beginning of the 1700s before individual freedom of choice by the citizens along with multiple versions of Christianity would be tolerated in most of the European countries. In those places where either Catholicism or Lutheranism was the official church, those attracted to the Reformed Church tradition needed a stronger, more aggressive personality in order to go against the stream of the dominating form of Christianity where they lived.

From the late 1700s in North America after the diminishing of state church orientation in most of the colonies, the appeal of the Reformed tradition had a lot to do with one's immigrant heritage, along with levels of education. If a Scottish or Irish Protestant descendant, then the Reformed tradition would have tremendous appeal as an expression of honouring one's forefathers. The same held true for Dutch descendants in the new world. Added to that was the strong, long standing emphasis upon education that Calvin had injected into this religious tradition early on. In a new world where being educated played a significant role in rising to leadership levels of society, to be a Presbyterian or Reformed Church member gave one distinct advantages in society. This would have been true in most of the colonies, except for a few of the southern colonies where the Church of England dominated society. Out of this educational orientation gradually evolves the concentration of Presbyterian and Reformed Church orientation by many of the governmental leaders and businessmen in the new world. This early domination becomes somewhat diffused over time with the emergence of Methodists, Baptists, and others with strong educational focus. But up until more recent times in North America, Baptists and others were concentrated in working class America while Presbyterians, Methodists, Anglicans found most of their members in the so-called 'white collar' America. The Second Great Awakening in the 1800s did much to change the social and religious complexion of the US away from Presbyterian dominance of the upper levels

of American society. Their largely non-participation in this spiritual revival which brought Baptists, Methodists etc. into overwhelming dominance of many of the states in the US at all social levels, which meant the loss of influence in many regions of the country for Presbyterianism. Its continued attraction shifted in large measure to the influence of some parts of Calvinistic teaching on many of these newly emerging religious groups with new found political and social influence over society.

From a purely religious marketing point of view, one of the enduring appeals of Calvinism on both sides of the Atlantic has been the well organized and highly structured system of belief that seeks to answer most of the questions that people tend to raise. To be sure some aspects of its teaching such as limited atonement, double predestination et als are 'turn offs' to many educated folks. But in New School Presbyterianism of the last couple of centuries these objectionable emphases have been either greatly diminished or outright rejected. What remains is a symmetrically balanced and well structured system of belief that appeals to many individuals.

One additional aspect of Presbyterian and Reformed Church appeal in the United States has been their system of church governance. Calvin's restructuring of this in Geneva with the consistory and eldership concepts laid the foundations for representative civil democracy, which heavily influenced the shaping of the US constitution and political system of government. Thus when civil government began working along somewhat similar lines to church government, the Presbyterians had a distinct advantage over other religious groups with alternative systems of governance, e.g., the Anglicans.

Added to that in the 1700s and 1800s was the long standing Reformed tradition of sympathy toward refugees and displaced people. Calvin established this tendency at Geneva especially with French and British refugees fleeing religious persecution in the 1500s. Early Presbyterians and Dutch Reformed leaders in the new colonies continued this heritage, even while the British Puritans did little to take in outsiders and allow them to continue practicing their alternative beliefs. But one should note that this sympathetic posture was from a stance of being in control, not from an attitude of considering these refugees as equals religiously or otherwise. Limitations on advance in society for non members were always in place.²³³ This sense of equality for diverse viewpoints has only come to the forefront in Presbyterian church life in the US during the past century, and largely due to the strong emphasis on ecumenical based unity.

Who then in today's world is likely to be attracted

²³³The experiment of Roger Williams in Rhode Island was particularly radical for the time since it treated other groups -- Christian and non-Christian -- as equal members of society.

to the Reformed tradition? In North America particularly, it is most like a well educated individual seeking a relatively clearly defined system of belief. Often he may be a 'displaced' individual having suffered some bad experience in another religious group, particularly another Christian denomination. A mixture of simple but clearly liturgical worship styles found in most Presbyterian churches will be appealing. Adherence to historic Christian creeds but freedom to reject aspects found distasteful will make the Reformed tradition attractive.

One of the very real dilemmas in the Reformed tradition is how to 'sell' this image effectively in a highly competitive religion marketplace. Faced with consistent declines in membership over several decades, the survival of this tradition in the future will depend on finding workable answers to this dilemma. Whether to compromise further this heritage or to revive its early expressions is one of the dynamics of this dilemma. New School Presbyterianism tends toward compromise, while Old School advocates push the latter.

IV. Biblical Assessment

For virtually every Protestant Christian, the bottom line standard of assessment is whether a tradition is legitimately rooted in biblical principle or not. One of the enduring contributions of Luther, Calvin and the other sixteenth century reformers was the principle of *sola scriptura*. This means that everything we believe and practice as Christians must stand ultimately within the boundaries of scriptural teaching. The Christian Bible as God's Word stands as the standard of final judgment of all humanity on the Day of Judgment. Nothing can be considered authentic Christian belief and practice without a clearly defined foundation in scripture.

Thus the Reformed tradition, as is true for every other system of Christian belief and practice, must come under scrutiny from scripture as a part of an evaluation of its religious teachings. Ultimately only God can make the final assessment, but as Jesus demanded of His followers in Matthew 7:15-20, believers must also make an assessment in this world as well.²³⁴

²³⁴**Mt. 7:15-20.** 15 Προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν ψευδοπροφητῶν, οἵτινες ἔρχονται πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ἐνδύμασιν προβάτων, ἔσωθεν δέ εἰσιν λύκοι ἄρπαγες. 16 ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτούς. μήτι συλλέγουσιν ἀπὸ ἀκανθῶν σταφυλᾶς ἢ ἀπὸ τριβόλων σῦκα; 17 οὕτως πᾶν δένδρον ἀγαθὸν καρποὺς καλοὺς ποιεῖ, τὸ δὲ σαπρὸν δένδρον καρποὺς πονηροὺς ποιεῖ. 18 οὐ δύναται δένδρον ἀγαθὸν καρποὺς πονηροὺς ποιεῖν οὐδὲ δένδρον σαπρὸν καρποὺς καλοὺς ποιεῖν. 19 πᾶν δένδρον μὴ ποιῶν καρπὸν καλὸν ἐκκόπτεται καὶ εἰς πῦρ βάλλεται. 20 ἄρα γε ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτούς.

15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? 17 In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad

But the human assessment always contains limitations, simply because we cannot see as clearly as God does. This does not excuse us from the mandate imposed on us by Jesus and the apostles, but it does urge the caution of self awareness that Jesus put on the table in Matt. 7:1-5.²³⁵ Aware that we have limits and a motivation to help rather than to condemn are to stand behind every evaluation offered by followers of Jesus. Thus out of these parameters I will proceed to set forth my critique of Calvinism against the standards of biblical revelation.

The general assessment of Zwingli and Calvin by his Anabaptist contemporaries is a good starting point: These two reformers in the Anabaptist view made a good break with the Roman church but did not go far enough in order to get back to the New Testament teachings. This movement, which came to be known as the Swiss Brethren, began in Zürich as followers of Zwingli, but after the Second Disputation of Zürich in 1525 broke away from Zwingli to form a separate movement.²³⁶ The leaders in Zürich were Felix Manz, Conrad Grebel, George Blaurock and a few others. In 1527, **Mitre bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will know them by their fruits.**

²³⁵**Matt. 7:1-5.** 1 Μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε· 2 ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίματι κρίνετε κριθήσεσθε, καὶ ἐν ᾧ μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν. 3 τί δὲ βλέπεις τὸ κάρφος τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου, τὴν δὲ ἐν τῷ σῷ ὀφθαλμῷ δοκὸν οὐ κατανοεῖς; 4 ἢ πῶς ἐρεῖς τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου· ἄφες ἐκβάλλω τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἡ δοκὸς ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ σου; 5 ὑποκριτά, ἐκβαλε πρῶτον ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ σου τὴν δοκόν, καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος ἐκ τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

1 Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. 2 For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. 3 Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your neighbor, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.

²³⁶The two 'Disputations' in January and September of 1523 where public gatherings called by the city council of Zürich to hear the variety of viewpoints from Catholic to anti-catholic being preached in the city and surrounding region. The city council upon hearing every preacher's presentation would decide who could continue preaching in the area and under what terms. In the first hearing in January, Zwingli so outshined the Catholic cardinal sent to represent the Catholic viewpoint, as well as the other protesting preachers that he won the day with the city council.

The second meeting in September was much larger and centered on the legitimacy of the mass, the presence of statues and icons in the churches, and a few other issues. Conrad Grebel led a group of younger preachers who passionately argued replacing infant baptism with adult baptism and contended that the reforms taking place were not sufficient and not moving rapidly enough. Their views were rejected completely, and a compromise agreement to leave the icons in place was reached. This led to the breaking of ties by the Swiss Brethren group.

For more details see "Huldrych Zwingli," wikipedia.org.

chael Sattler released the Schleithem Articles that defined seven points of disagreement with Zwingli and the emerging Reform movement:²³⁷ believer's baptism only valid one; church discipline should be practiced biblically, not through civil government; only those who have submitted to believer's baptism should observe the Lord's Supper; the community of believers should separate itself from evil people; every church should have a pastor with high disciplined commitment to the Gospel and a willingness to be disciplined for sinful lapses; violence must never be used by Christians in any circumstance; no taking of oaths permitted because of Jesus' teachings against them.

As a beginning confession of faith, it largely defined the Swiss Brethren opposition to Zwingli and later even more so to Calvin. To a large degree, these criticisms were right on target. Calvin's training as a lawyer and not possessing any ministerial training left him with huge gaps in grasping the full impact of the teachings of the New Testament. Consequently the legal tones of his teachings especially in the *Institutes* come to the forefront and occasionally override the biblical text and its teachings.

One must admit that Calvin was a product of his sixteenth century world that placed occasional severe boundaries on his ability to grasp the biblical text. His background training in and commitment to Renaissance humanism opened the door to go back to the ancients for better understanding of the past. But in that past, he found not just the biblical writers but also the church fathers who had 'Grecianized' the Christian scriptures into a brand new book with not a lot of connection to the original documents. The Jewishness of Jesus was washed out by their growing anti-Semitism, and contemporary Greek philosophical categories and definitions replaced those established by the LXX among the New Testament writers.

A prime example of this for Calvin -- and one with huge negative consequences -- was his adoption of the early Catholic redefinition of πίστις and πιστεύω (faith / I believe) away from the Jewish based idea of complete volitional surrender of one's life to Christ that established a person relationship with Christ, in favor of the idea of faith being primarily intellectual assent to teachings about Christ. For Catholics, what the church taught about Jesus; for Calvin what the 'rightly interpreted' Bible taught about Jesus. This foundational mistake led to the building of a theological system in competition to that of the Catholics along the lines of Anselm's and Aquinas' philosophical based theologies. The atmos-

²³⁷Shortly after releasing this confession of faith, Sattler, a leader of the Swiss Brethren movement, was arrested along with several others. They were executed for their resistance to what was happening in Zürich and beyond.

phere of the times strongly pushed Calvin this direction to be sure, but it was a huge mistake and one that his Anabaptist opponents did not make. Thus central to their teaching was the volitional faith commitment by every individual as the heart of Christian conversion. For them understanding and intellect played a very secondary role, not the primary role that it did for Calvin. Thus flowing out of the Swiss Brethren teachings came then believer's baptism, the full symbolic view of both baptism and the Lord's Supper etc.

Another large mistake by Calvin was the attempt to frame God's dealings with humanity around the two covenant structure. Thus his theological system is shaped and defined by a highly nationalistically formed projection of the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. Although most Presbyterians and Reformed Church teachers today hardly mention this structural foundation, it played an important role for Calvin as his response to Luther's equally miss-informed teaching on Law and Gospel. Thus was hatched the popular Protestant viewpoint still around in some circles that the Jews were saved by works while everybody else is saved by grace. The entire system is destroyed by Paul's teachings on the covenant of Abraham and salvation by grace in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. There has never been a 'covenant of works.' The so-called new covenant of Jesus is actually the continuation and completion of the original covenant with Abraham and reaffirmed by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Covenant language in Paul only shows up when confronting Jewish legalism; otherwise the idea of covenant plays virtually no role in his teachings. The work of salvation in Christ is far too rich and profound to be limited to a single image that defines limits to what God can do.

Although Calvin's commitment to humanism helped him in many ways, it did him a great disservice when he came to the terminology in passages like Rom. 8:28-30.

28 Οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν τὸν θεὸν πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἀγαθόν, τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν. 29 ὅτι οὓς προέγνω, καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον ἐν πολλοῖς ἀδελφοῖς· 30 οὓς δὲ προώρισεν, τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν· καὶ οὓς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν· οὓς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν.

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

The terms of κλητοῖς, προέγνω, προώρισεν, ἐκάλεσεν, ἐδικαίωσεν, and ἐδόξασεν are stripped out of the rather

poetic expression of Paul and out of their Jewish roots to be 'Grecianized' to some extent by Augustine and other church fathers with philosophical oriented meanings very different from the Jewish background meanings.²³⁸ Add to that the hardening tendencies of Calvin's early humanism, but much worse the severe stiffening of the terms from the later rationalism of the Reformed scholastic traditions and the result is a hugely insulting 'hyper-Calvinism' that changes the fundamental New Testament image of God as Heavenly Father into Jonathan Edwards' "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." Even some of Calvin's early critics sensed a huge mistake here, as for example, did Jérôme-Hermès Bolsec, a physician in Geneva who attacked Calvin's doctrine of predestination and accused him of making God the author of sin. Sometime later Jacobus Arminius correctly recognized "that Calvinist predestination and unconditional election made God the author of evil. Instead, Arminius insisted, God's election was an election of believers and therefore was conditioned on faith. Furthermore, Arminius argued, God's exhaustive foreknowledge did not require a doctrine of determinism" ["History of Calvinist-Arminian debate," wikipedia.org].

Off of the predestination philosophy comes double predestination where God arbitrarily decides in advance to send some to Hell and others to Heaven; irresistible grace where humans have no ability to choose or to reject God's invitation to Christ; total depravity where the sinful fall of Adam has completely destroyed the human ability not only to choose, but to do good; and others points. All of this clearly flies in the face of scriptural teaching about God, the death of Christ for all the world (cf. Jhn. 3:16); the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in the sinner urging him to choose Christ rather than reject Him etc. It is very understandable then why in the "new school Presbyterianism" of today's world these highly offensive doctrines get pushed way into the background if not outright rejected.

What Calvin managed to spawn -- I suspect, largely without realizing it -- was a hermeneutical system for interpreting not just religion but all of life. In his Swiss cultural atmosphere of the 1500s, that world could easily revolve around church and government in a close, inter connectional relationship that enforced Christian ideals on to every person within the civil governmental territory. That Christian society was essentially uniform

²³⁸For example προορίζω is often translated 'predestinate.' But the simple meaning of the verb is to 'decide to do something in advance.' Thus what Paul is saying is that those whom God knew about ahead of time, He also decided in advance to invite them to His Son. No sign of determinism exists in this passage what so ever. This error is the result of injecting philosophical rationalism into the defining of biblical terms that completely ignores the Jewish heritage of the profoundly rich ideas.

with the Reformed General Synod most making all the decisions and the civil government enforcing them. To be sure, it was to be a participatory process with the congregation through its elders as a key element in the decision making process that flowed through the local council, the consistory and to the General Synod. His system mandated civil laws, church laws, economic policies, social policies limiting everyday life. The problem was that it was only workable to a limited degree even in sixteenth century Switzerland, and has become less and less workable with the passing of time that has brought society into a highly pluralistic modern world with very little tolerance of church meddling in the affairs of government and vica versa, plus virtually no tolerance for either one meddling in the personal day by day affairs of its citizens. A civil law in modern society requiring regular church attendance in the state church of all residents would absolutely not be tolerated today. But in Calvin's world it was considered normative.

The gradual extension of the earlier Roman Catholic view of the sacred and the secular over time into the modern world has carved out these two domains of life that are supposed to be separate from one another -- at least in the thinking of most people in the modern western world. Calvin's Swiss world comes along when the majority thinking was that the official church had the right to control both domains, whether that church be Catholic, Lutheran, or Reformed. But the later Age of Reason changed that way of thinking profoundly. And particularly was this true in the French and American cultures where individual liberty and personal freedom were extended much beyond that found in most of the rest of western society. Religion is generally understood to occupy one small niche of life and government an even smaller segment. Individual liberty dominates.

While biblical truth does not divide up life into such neat compartments, this departmentalizing mentality finds wide support today as the best way to function both as an individual and as a religious group in a highly pluralistic society. Calvin's teachings about the all encompassing Divine Will of God worked with some success in sixteenth century Europe where church and government stood in partnership with one another exercising fundamental control over the lives of the residents. But such an approach today would be utterly disastrous to any society seeking to implement it in the same way. The biblical principle of God's will covering all of life can only be implemented voluntarily by the individual Christian genuinely seeking to follow God's leadership. The requiring of such can only be done inside the framework of the religious group that the individual Christian belongs to. Disaster looms when this is extended further, and is mandated.

To be sure, clashes of viewpoint between Christians

and non-Christians will happen, and this especially when one segment attempts to impose its views across the society on others outside of the individual religious group etc. that the individual participates in. Most western countries, in their own distinctive ways,²³⁹ have adopted legal structures that severely limit what any individual or single group can do by way of imposing their views universally across the society.²⁴⁰ Europe's sad experience just with the Thirty Years' War (1611-1648) alone has dramatically underscored the impossibility of the earlier common perspective of Calvin, Luther, and the Roman Catholic leadership of the previous century.

In light of the many gaps and weaknesses in the thinking of Calvin, and especially many of his successors, are there positive contributions coming out of this movement? The answer is clearly a yes. And these are in a variety of spheres of modern life.

His contribution to the Protestant Christian emphasis upon *sola scriptura* remains a central legacy that has helped reshape Christianity back toward scriptural principles. His writing of commentaries on many of the books of the Bible has left a heritage of Bible commentary writing that established this discipline as necessary for all of Christianity. While the world of biblical scholarship has moved on far beyond Calvin's skills of analysing a scripture text and communicating its meaning, he nonetheless helped launch such endeavours by the example of his extensive writing ministry.

Beyond religion Calvin's influence has had a largely positive impact. He did put a lot of emphasis on the rights and welfare of ordinary people in the Gene-

²³⁹The ranch of approaches runs from retaining a state church but with legal status for alternative groups in many of the European countries on one side of the spectrum to the American experiment with Separation of Church and State on the other side. In an imperfect human society, no one system provides an ideal answer to coping with pluralistic societies with many different religious beliefs.

²⁴⁰One of the ways that this thinking has been falsely justified is by the mistaken notion that some modern western country or region has taken the place of 'covenant Israel' in the Old Testament as the focus of divine blessing. The frequent language of establishing a 'Christian nation' reflects this erroneous interpretation of scripture. No such idea was ever put forth by either Jesus or the apostles. And no subsequent ethnic group of people have ever -- or will ever -- replace covenant Israel. Texts such as 1 Peter 2 make it clear that the believing Christian community has become the heirs of God's covenant promises to spiritual Israel. But no Christian community can ever be turned into a political or national entity. The colonization of North America proved the impossibility of this thinking. This thinking is completely contrary to the scriptural principles. Consequently the idea of a Christian civil political party is totally an oxymoron!

Christian social principles may help shape and influence a society, but must do so in the competitive marketplace of other ideas and values coming out of alternative religious and philosophical sources. And a society must be so structured as to prevent the dominance of any one group over the entire country.

va canton. And he promoted democracy as a form of government, although he felt a mixture of democracy and aristocratic rulership worked better. This evolved into a system of checks and balances between extremes either direction. In economic theory, he along with Luther strongly opposed usury but Calvin, unlike Luther, felt that modest interest rates on loans were permissible. Work was viewed as “a means through which the believers expressed their gratitude to God for their redemption in Christ and as a service to their neighbours.”²⁴¹ The accumulation of wealth, however, was not viewed positively by Calvin. Later on philosophers such as Max Weber, in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, viewed western capitalism in its destructive impact on society as having been derived largely from ascetic Protestantism, in which the Reformed tradition played a role.

Conclusion

What can one say about Calvinism? Hopefully this study has provided you the reader with some insights about this religious movement that will help form a more accurate picture in response to this question.²⁴²

For me personally, it has opened up a depth of insight never possessed previously, although the general contours of the movement have been understood since my student days in the early 1960s. As is true of any human based movement, both pluses and minuses exist. Although in its idealized goal to adhere to the Word of God, the historical reality is that the movement has been profoundly shaped and formed by the cultural winds blowing at different times over the past five hundred years, and along with the geographical and ethnic dynamics in the societies where it exists. Dutch Calvinism looks different from Swiss Calvinism, and clearly different from Scottish Calvinism etc.

My hope is for a greater appreciation of the positive contributions of John Calvin in the 1500s along with a clear recognition of his limits and failures in moving Christianity to the goals of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In many ways he is an inspiring figure still in our day, but he is far from a perfect model.²⁴³

Clearly Calvin and Zwingli, along with the other initial reformers in this movement, contributed powerfully

²⁴¹“John Calvin,” wikipedia.org.

²⁴²A personal word of thanks goes to Tiny Gordley who first posed to me the question “What is Calvinism?” several months ago. Her question triggered this exploration that hopefully answers the question helpfully and that has also expanded my own horizons substantially.

²⁴³Most of the modern world as well as the vast majority of the cultures in the ancient world did not need ‘perfect’ individuals for them to be heroic figures. Their dark side was known and acknowledged along side their extraordinary positive contributions. This is the more healthy approach to finding inspiration from figures from the past.

to the “five solas” of Protestantism:

- sola scriptura (by scripture alone)
- sola fide (by faith alone)
- Solus Christus (by Christ alone)
- Sola Gratia (by grace alone)
- Soli Deo Gloria (to God alone glory)

In this they have given immeasurable service to humanity, Christianity, and the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was liberated from the shackles of religious formalism that distorted and clouded its message to sinful, broken humanity. Countless millions of individuals have discovered a fresh experience of God’s life transforming grace. Our world is a far better place because of the courageous stance of these early reformers for the truths of the Gospel.



One expression of my goal in this study is that now by reading it through to the end, this initial picture of Calvin on page one has taken on new and deeper understanding for you. If this has happened, then the work in preparing the study has been worthwhile.