Calvin's Eschatology in Its Historical and Exegetical Context.

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CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CALVIN’S ESCHATOLOGY
IN ITS HISTORICAL AND EXEGETICAL CONTEXT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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ABSTRACT

This study reveals both the variety and complexity of Calvin’s eschatology by way of a historical and contextual approach. Against an ahistorical and dogmatic approach to Calvin, it discusses the necessity of locating and examining his eschatology in several contexts: theological and exegetical traditions, both his predecessors and contemporaries; variety of genre of his own works, from catechism to polemical treatise and biblical commentaries; and their chronological developments.

Calvin’s eschatology is basically traditional and owes much to the theological and spiritual heritage in the past. It is definitely, among others, in the Augustinian tradition though strongly characterized by his biblical and teleological emphasis, in which his own study of the book of the Romans seems to have played a significant role.

This study also demonstrates that Calvin’s teachings of last things are fundamentally exegetical and, thus, largely found in his exegetical works rather than in his magnum opus, the Institutes. Although Calvin eventually made a doctrine of the final resurrection as one of the theological loci in the last edition of his Institutes, the doctrine does not necessarily summarize the full content of Calvin’s eschatology. Calvin, instead, extensively argues many other eschatological subjects in his biblical commentaries.

Another aspect of this study is its chronological examination of Calvin’s teachings of last things. Besides the well-known history of development of the Institutes, it is crucially important for the balanced understanding of Calvin’s eschatology to pay attention to his later commentaries/lectures on the Old Testament prophets. Our study shows that the young Calvin’s uplifting eschatology is considerably expanded to a broad vision of the
“kingdom of Christ,” a vision rather social than individual, geographical than spiritual, in the thought of a matured Reformer.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

There is, at present, no full-scale study of Calvin’s eschatology\(^1\) in its historical context. In addition to the thinness of scholarship in this area, most of works, both monographs and articles, pay little attention to his historical context and are dominated by modern concerns or, even worse, theologically biased. Moreover, an adequate examination of Calvin’s commentaries has not been provided, and, astonishingly, his Old Testament commentaries have been virtually ignored. Furthermore, few of the older studies have considered the chronology and genre of Calvin’s writings. These deficiencies of the older studies of Calvin’s eschatology are made all the more obvious in terms of the historical and contextual approach in recent Calvin research.

1.1. History of Scholarship

Older textbooks of *Dogmengeschichte* tended to give few pages to the doctrine of last things in the Reformation era\(^2\) simply because there was virtually no controversial issue

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\(^1\) We use this term in the sense of “teaching of last things,” since it may be anachronistic to employ it for the study of the sixteenth century when the doctrine of last things was not clearly distinguished yet as a theological *locus* or discipline. Cf. Alfons Fischer, *Calvins Eschatologie in der Erstausgabe “Christianae Religionis Institutio” 1536* (Bamberg, 1995), 38-40.

on the topic between Roman Catholics and Protestants except the doctrine of purgatory.  
This agreement between two camps may be based on the fact that the Roman Catholics accepted the seventeenth article of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession, which deals with teachings of last things except that of purgatory, without any objection.

Likewise, Calvin’s doctrine of last things had not attracted scholars’ concern at least until 1900. With his ground-breaking work, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae: Ihr Begriff und Ihre Herrschende Stellung im System Calvins, Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von dessen Institutio*, Martin Schulze shed a new light on a long-time neglected theme in Calvin studies. As his title suggests, Schulze considers *meditatio futurae vitae*, the title of one of the chapters in Calvin’s *Institutes* of 1559, as a “Grundbegriff” or foundational concept to understand not only that small chapter, but also the whole system of Calvin’s theology

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3 “Protestants and Roman Catholics were in almost perfect accordance as to the doctrine of the last things (with the exception of the doctrine concerning purgatory),” in K.R.Hagenbach, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Third ed., Leipzig, 1853), 660. The citation is from its E.T. (New York, 1861 and 1872), vol.2, 370. One of the latest and most comprehensive handbooks of the history of doctrines still shows a similar understanding. See, Erhard Kunz, *Protestantische Eschatologie: Von der Reformation bis zur Aufklärung, Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, vol.4, ed. Michael Schmaus et al. (Freiburg: Herder, 1980), 4. Regarding the doctrine of purgatory, Protestant churches have rejected it in their confessions, as well as many theological treatises, as an unscriptural teaching. For example, *The Sixty-seven Articles or Conclusions of Ulrich Zwingli* (1523) LVII-LX; *The Ten Conclusions of Berne* (1528)VII; *The French Confession of Faith* (1559)IX; *The Scotch Confession of Faith* (1560)IX; *The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England* (1563)XXII; *The Second Helvetic Confession* (1566)XXXVI; *The Irish Articles of Religion* (1615)102. Concerning the doctrinal position of the Catholic side, see *The Canons and Dogmatic Decrees of the Council of Trent*, session 6 (1547), can.30; sess.22 (1562), ch.2; and sess.25 (1563).

4 “Our opponents accept Article XVII without exception. There we confess that at the consummation of the world Christ will appear and raise all the dead, granting eternal joys to the godly but condemning the ungodly to endless torment with the devil” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XVII). Translation is from *The Book of Concord*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert, 224.

5 Leipzig, 1901.

represented in his Institutes. For Schulze, the term *meditatio futurae vitae* means a determined orientation of emotion and will toward the future life, not an occasional mental activity. Unlike Luther, Schulze states, Calvin thinks that “the goodness of salvation is essentially an object of expectation”; and thus, the attitude toward this world necessarily becomes “ascetic.” In this ascetic view of life, according to Schulze, “Calvin has not overcome in principle the monastic ideal of life.” On the other hand, however, Schulze thinks that Calvin’s asceticism is of a strongly inward character and much deeper and purer than monasticism. It does not end up with an inward-looking spirituality but forward-looking, that is a *meditatio futurae vitae*. Since Calvin regards it as the purpose of the creation of human beings, according to Schulze, his whole theology is related to this concept.

Schulze also seeks for a source of the idea of *meditatio* as it seems to him more than a biblical expression. In his judgment, the concept might have come primarily from Plato.

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7 Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 1: “Es ist aber meine Absicht weiter zu zeigen, dass es sich dabei um einen Grundbegriff das Calvin’schen Denkens handelt, um einen Begriff, welcher seine ganze Auffassung vom Christentum bestimmt und durch alle Teile seiner Institutio sich hindurchzieht.”

8 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 3. In Schulze’s observation, the synonyms of *meditatio* would be *desederium, studio flagrare, ardenner expetere*, and *gemitu ac suspiris expetere*.


14 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 75-76.
In particular. In fact, Calvin’s view of life looks so similar to Plato’s that “we would have to assume Plato’s direct influence on Calvin in this respect.” As Schulze himself concedes, however, this conclusion seems to have at least two difficulties: evidential and theological. First, there is no reference to Plato in the earliest edition of *Institutes* from which Calvin’s whole theological system has developed. To this question, Schulze replies by pointing out the facts that Calvin shows his knowledge of classical literature including Plato already in his first scholarly work, *Commentary on Seneca’s De Clementia*, four years earlier than the 1536 *Institutes*. Moreover, the latter was written primarily for beginners of the Christian religion, not for more advanced students of theology for whom its second and later editions were designed. As a matter of fact, there appear seven references to Plato in the 1539 edition of the *Institutes*. Secondly, there is one crucial theological difference between Calvin’s and Plato’s eschatology, namely, the doctrine of resurrection. Although it is true that Calvin emphasizes this doctrine in his discussion, Schulze sees here something different from purely biblical teachings.

According to Schulze, it consists of Calvin’s future-oriented disposition promulgated by his

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15 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 76 ff.


17 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 82.

18 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 82.


21 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 86.
own poor health, his study of Plato, and, of course, the decisive influence of the Holy Scripture.\textsuperscript{22}

Hence, Schulze concludes that Calvin established his own \textit{christiana philosophia} which, though distinguished from all other worldly philosophies by its principle of the Holy Spirit, still stands primarily as a \textit{philosophy}.\textsuperscript{23} Further, in his observation, he states that Calvin’s notion of \textit{christiana philosophia} recalls another great Christian humanist, namely, Erasmus, in whom we can find the same interaction of Platonism and Christianity.\textsuperscript{24} And this is the subject that Schulze explores in his sequel work.\textsuperscript{25}

Since its publication, Schulze’s thesis has caused a sensation and received many responses.\textsuperscript{26} Most scholars basically approve the significance of eschatology, the concept

\textsuperscript{22} See, Schulze, \textit{Meditatio Futurae Vitae}, 88: “Calvin hat, persönlich gewiss für die Richtung auf das Jenseits disponiert und immermehr dafür empfänglich gemacht durch seine Kränklichkeit, zuerst Anregungen in dieser Beziehung durch seine Platostudien empfangen, und diese haben sich mit dem weiter hin durchschlagenden Einflusse der heiligen Schrift verschmolzen....”

\textsuperscript{23} See, Schulze, \textit{Meditatio Futurae Vitae}, 88, with reference to Calvin’s \textit{Institutes}, III.vii.1.

\textsuperscript{24} See, Schulze, \textit{Meditatio Futurae Vitae}, 88.

\textsuperscript{25} Calvin’s Jenseits-Christentum in seinem Verhältnisse zu den religiösen Schriften des Erasmus. Gorlitz, 1902.

\textsuperscript{26} See, Quistorp’s survey in his \textit{Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things} (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), 52-54 and footnotes, where he mentions E. Douergue, \textit{Jean Calvin: Les hommes et les choses de son temps}, vol. 4: La pensée religieuse de Calvin (Lausanne, 1910), 305-317; A. Lang, Johannes Calvin: Ein Lebensbild zu seinem 400. Geburtstag am 10. Juli 1909 (Leipzig, 1909), 75-77; Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche (Leipzig, 1905), s.v. “Protestantismus” by F. Kattenbusch, 170; P. Wernle, Der evangelische Glaube nach den Hauptschriften der Reformatoren, vol. 3, 348; A. Göhler, \textit{Calvins Lehre von der Heiligung: Dargestellt auf Grund der Institutio, exegetischer und homiletischer Schriften} (München, 1934), 60; H. Bauke, \textit{Die Problem der Theologie Calvin’s} (Leipzig, 1922), 3-4; and W. Niesel, \textit{Die Theologie Calvins} (Munich, 1938), 142 [E.T., 149, n.3]. To this list, we may be able to add two other early reactions. J. Bohatec picks up Schulze’s thesis in his discussion of \textit{Calvins Vorsehungs Lehre} (in Calvinstüden: Festschrift zum 400. Geburtstage Johann Calvins [Leipzig, 1909], 415-416 and 427-429) and argues that \textit{meditatio futurae vitae} is not a central idea in Calvin’s theology, but rather a “supporting idea” (Hilfsidee)” for the doctrine of providence (Ibid., 428). In his 1920 edition of \textit{Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte} (vol. 2, pt. 2, 562-564), R. Seeberg dealt with the subject of “Jenseitsstimmung und Weltbeherrschung” in the section of Calvin, which has not appeared in its earlier editions (1895/ 1898), and discussed it in terms of Calvin’s piety rather than his theology. He appreciates Schulze who pointed out the
of *meditatio futurae vitae* in particular, in Calvin’s theology and piety. Some even agree with Schulze about humanistic (Erasmian) and Platonic influences on Calvin. However, many are critical of the one-sidedness and exaggeration of Schulze’s arguments, especially his identification of Calvin’s piety with monasticism and Platonism.

In 1941, forty years after Schulze’s work, another significant work on our subject appeared, that is, *Die letzten Dinge im Zeugnis Calvins: Calvins Eschatologie* by Heinrich Quistorp. Having been inspired by a lecture of Paul Althaus on eschatology and a Platonic idealism in Calvin’s piety though not without a criticism especially on Schulze’s oft-exaggerate arguments (Ibid., 563, n.2).


31 During the period, there have not been without contributions to the scholarship. Among on-going discussions about Schulze’s thesis noted above, the masterful work of Doumergue has a particular importance. It not only defends the biblical character of Calvin’s eschatology, but also gives sizable chapters on the subject explaining Calvin’s view of immortality of soul and of general resurrection in his *Institutes*. See, Jean Calvin: *Les hommes et les choses de son temps*, vol.4, chs.4 and 7.

32 Gütersloh, 1941. An English translation is made by Harold Knight as *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, with a foreword of T. F. Torrance (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955). Further references to this treatise will be made by this translation.

seminar, whose text was a new critical edition of Calvin’s *Psychopannychia*, held in the house of his teacher, Karl Barth. Quistorp brought new insights into the study of Calvin’s eschatology. Like Wilhelm Niesel, who denies the so-called “central doctrine” or “central dogma” theory, Quistorp regards Calvin’s eschatology not just as a “Grundbegriff” but as a pervasive issue in his whole theology, and characterizes Calvin as “the theologian of hope.” In order to illuminate this eschatological character of Calvin’s theology effectively, Quistorp worked on not only Calvin’s *Institutes* but the whole range of his writings, including biblical commentaries, sermons, and letters.

According to Quistorp, Calvin’s teaching of last things developed through his theological and exegetical efforts, and eventually became “a moving testimony to the Christ who finishes His saving work and whose actions form in the last resort one unique event.” This Christ-event, however, is far beyond the earthly time scale. It is “the breaking in of

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34 Edited by Walther Zimmerli (Leipzig, 1932).

35 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 9-10.


40 In this respect, Quistorp was probably influenced, again, by Wilhelm Niesel. Cf. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, 20-21.

41 Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 108-109. Quistorp considers this dynamism in Calvin’s eschatology as a difference which distinguishes him from his successors.
the future of God which cannot be included in the span of world time”; therefore, it cannot
and should not be sketched out in apocalyptic pictures “in terms of which the ultimate event
could be mythologized.” Now, Calvin’s “de-mythologized” eschatology affects his
qualification as a pupil of Scripture. Even though Calvin deals with apocalyptic texts in
his commentaries, “Calvin’s horror of apocalyptism plainly leads him astray from the text
and meaning of Scripture.” Quistorp sees here “a certain tension” or even “threat” caused
by Calvin’s loyalty to Scripture and his humanistic character. Consequently, in
Quistorp’s view, Calvin is less concerned with such apocalyptic themes as the imminent
return of Christ and end of the world, the signs of the times, the fulfillment of the church,
and the new earth, than with the doctrine of the perfection of believers’ salvation. Quistorp
calls these inclinations in Calvin’s eschatology “spiritualization” and
“individualization.”

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43 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 53.
44 Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 115 and 113.
46 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 110.
47 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 114.
48 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 180.
49 See, Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 110 and 180.
50 Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 180. Quistorp ascribes Calvin’s spiritualizing
tendency, in part, to Augustine’s influence (*Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 193, n.1).
Since its publication, Quistorp’s work has been the most comprehensive survey of the subject and not been superseded to this day.\textsuperscript{51} In fact, many scholars by and large follow his view of Calvin’s eschatology, even if they at times differ from it on certain points.\textsuperscript{52} Nevertheless, it has not been without criticisms. It seems to me that there are some methodological problems even prior to considering its content itself.

First, Quistorp’s presentation of Calvin’s eschatology seems to have a certain theological “tendency,” evidenced especially in his claim that “Calvin’s theology is Christology; this is equally true of his eschatology,”\textsuperscript{53} and his existential or neo-orthodox terminology such as “Christ-event” and “the breaking in of the future of God.” Thus, despite Quistorp’s use of Calvin’s commentaries, his analysis has a dogmatic rather than an exegetical outcome which shows a theological tendency of its own, and not always of Calvin’s. Secondly, how successfully Quistorp could avoid the “central doctrine” theory, which he opposes, is quite questionable for he regards Christology as “the central standpoint.”\textsuperscript{54} Thirdly, even more problematically, Quistorp at times attempts to criticize

\textsuperscript{51} The only exception might be Andrew M. Davis’ doctoral thesis: “A New Assessment of John Calvin’s Eschatology” (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1998). Despite its comprehensive and updated study, it seems to pay little attention either to many significant secondary literatures, including Schulze’s works, mostly written in continental languages, or to the recent trend in Calvin research.


\textsuperscript{54} Quistorp, \textit{Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things}, 192.
Calvin’s teachings anachronistically by the standard of modern biblical studies.\(^5^5\)

Furthermore, he cites mostly from Calvin’s New Testament commentaries and pays little attention to Old Testament ones that contain Calvin’s final thoughts. Finally, Quistorp makes no comparative references to Calvin’s predecessors and contemporaries, thus failing to identify the context of Calvin’s thought.

To say that virtually no work has superseded Quistorp’s work yet does not mean that there has not been any contribution to the study. Torrance, for example, by focusing on the theme of “Kingdom of God,” relates Calvin’s eschatology to that of Greek Fathers in their emphasis on “the renewal of the world” rather than that of individual salvation.\(^5^6\) In his solid comparative studies of Calvin and Plato, Partee clearly shows that, despite its humanistic outlook, Calvin’s eschatology is definitely biblical.\(^5^7\) Moreover, some Dogmengeschichte scholars point out that the overestimation of Calvin’s eschatology and emphasis on the difference between Calvin and other Reformers, Luther in particular, is misleading.\(^5^8\) Holwerda even calls Calvin’s view of last things “a rather moderate,


\(^{57}\) Charles Partee, “The Soul in Plato, Platonism, and Calvin,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 (1969): 278-295; and *Calvin and Classical Philosophy* (Leiden, 1977). However, one of the latest studies also points out that the role of Greek philosophy in Calvin’s thought is more significant and more complicated. See, the chapter 2 of Irena Backus, *Historical Method and Confessional Identity in the Era of the Reformation (1378-1615)* (Brill, 2003).

\(^{58}\) See, for example, Walther Koehler, *Dogmengeschichte: als Geschichte des christlichen Selbstbewusstseins* (Zürich: Max Niehans Verlag, 1951), 496-497; Kunz, *Protestantische Eschatologie*, 31.
nonspeculative, middle-of-the-road position, containing no creative reformulation of the church’s eschatology.”

Apart from theological discussions of Calvin’s eschatology, significant methodological changes in Calvin study have taken place during the past decades. In the early 1990s, Heiko A. Oberman addressed the subject of eschatology in young Calvin, and yet he did so in a quite different way from previous studies did. He endeavored to re-interpret the young Reformer’s thought strictly in the context of intellectual and spiritual (or psychological) milieu in the early sixteenth century. Thus, Calvin’s thought is properly discussed in continuity and discontinuity with the late medieval traditions and contemporary thought.

In his *Initia Calvini*, Oberman assumes Scotistic influence on the “eschatological” or “teleological” character of Calvin’s theological framework, and locates his concept of *meditatio futurae vitae* precisely in this context. He even believes that it is Calvin’s terror of “abyss” that psychologically drove the young humanist to re-discover the true “hope” in Gospel, as clearly seen in his first theological treatise, *Psychopannychia*. Hence, after

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almost a century from Schulze’s study, Calvin’s eschatological thought appeared to be an important factor to understand the reformer.

Nobody would doubt the significance of the strictly historical method that Oberman took. It is also true, however, that certain limitation always goes along with a historical inquiry into direct psychological influences on a figure because it never goes beyond a guess-work.

Having been strongly influenced by Oberman and taken this more historical and contextual approach to Calvin’s thought, scholars like Steinmetz, Schreiner, Thompson, and Muller go in a slightly different direction.63 Instead of inquiring into direct influences or even psychological impetus on Calvin, they attempt to provide the matrix of doctrinal and exegetical traditions, ancient and medieval, in which Calvin’s teachings could be rightly interpreted.64 This approach is all the more important if Ganoczy is right when he says that Calvin “was influenced more by his readings than by various personalities with whom he had contact.”65 It is apparent today that Calvin owed much in his work, in the first edition of the Institutes for example, to other reformers’ works.66

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64 See, Steinmetz, Calvin in Context, vii-viii; Schreiner, The Theater of His Glory, 2; Thompson, John Calvin and the Daughters of Sarah, 23-29; Muller, Unaccommodated Calvin, 3-17.

65 Ganoczy, Young Calvin, 133.

66 Cf. Ganoczy, Young Calvin, pt.2.
Moreover, scholars are also becoming aware of the fact that Calvin trained as a humanist had an acute sensitivity of literary genre. It is not enough for our study, therefore, to deal with the whole range of Calvin’s writings without paying attention to their genre distinctions in order to understand the variety and nuances of his teachings.

Hence, against an ahistorical and dogmatic approach to Calvin, it is significantly necessary to locate his teachings in several contexts: the context of theological and exegetical traditions, his predecessors and contemporaries, variety of genre of his own works. Let us look briefly at recent scholarship on the more direct historical context for Calvin’s teaching of last things.

1.2. Recent Scholarship on the Medieval Background for Calvin’s Eschatology

In recent scholarship of the Reformation, as noted above, scholars have been extensively attracted to its medieval backgrounds and their continuity and discontinuity in the sixteenth century. This is definitely a significant aspect we have to pursue in Calvin’s thought, even though he rarely makes explicit reference to medieval sources.

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One of the most recent and significant contributions to this task, especially related to our study, is done by Irena Backus. In her *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich, and Wittenberg*, she examines sixteenth-century commentaries of the book of Revelation written by Lutheran and Reformed exegetes, and shows the diversity of interpretation on the book which reflects not only the commentators’ indebtedness to theological and exegetical tradition in past, but also their views of the situation in their time and future. This study is particularly interesting and provides another context for our study when we consider the fact that our Genevan Reformer never wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse.

As we have noted in the introduction, we probably could state that the doctrine of purgatory was the only exception while there seemed to be no controversial issue in the doctrine of last things between the Catholics and the Protestants. Although the topic of purgatory (*purgatorium* / a place for purgation or purification) was usually treated not in terms of last things but of the sacrament of penance, it is also true, as recent studies show,

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71 For instance, *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession* XII. Since this doctrine presupposes the intermediate state between death and resurrection, it did not prevail well in the ancient church when people were fervent for the imminent return of Christ (exceptions, however, are Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.iii, Strom.vii*; and Origen, *Hom. Num.xxxv, Hom. Ps.xxxvi*). Classical descriptions of the fire in the purgatory are found, for example, in Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae*, q.70, art.3; Suppl. I &II), Bonaventura (*Breviloquium*, vii:2), and Gerson (*Sermo ii, De detanetis*). Scriptural proofs are II Macc.12:45, Mt.12:32, 1 Cor.3:15, Rev.22:15, etc., although Erasmus denied 1 Cor.3:15 as a proof. For the Catholic view of purgatory by one of the sixteenth century mystics, Catherine of Genoa (1447-1510), see her “Treatise on Purgatory” in *Late Medieval Mysticism*, ed. Ray C. Petry, *The Library of Christian Classics* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), 392-413.
that the doctrine itself was a portion of the complex of medieval eschatology,\textsuperscript{72} deeply interwoven with medieval system of sacraments,\textsuperscript{73} popular piety,\textsuperscript{74} and apocalyptic spirituality.\textsuperscript{75} In fact, that medieval eschatology seems to have been still active to some extent even among the Reformers despite their denial of the doctrine of purgatory.

Scholars have tended to overlook the fact that not only such fanatic radicals as Thomas Müntzer and Carlstadt but also major Reformers shared, more or less, the contemporary view of history, especially its last time. As Oberman insists, “we will fail to

\textsuperscript{72} For general description on the subject, see for instance, Christoph Ernst Heinrich Auffarth, \textit{Mittelalterliche Eschatologie} (Mannheim, 1996).


grasp his [Luther’s] self-understanding if we do not see him as emerging from the beginning of his public career onward as an apocalyptic prophet at the end of time, placed in the increasing power struggle between God and the devil.” Since the tradition of medieval eschatology is submerged in various ways in theological and exegetical works of Reformers, Calvin in particular, we have to examine one by one to explore how much he owed to and how far he departed from it. Our study, hence, will include comparisons with various medieval thinkers.

1.3. Purpose and Method

This study will show that Calvin’s teachings of last things are largely found in his exegetical works, as well as a treatise like Psychopannychia, rather than in his Institutes, and that they are basically traditional and owe much to the theological and spiritual heritage in the past. Following out the historical, contextual, and exegetical methods indicated in recent research, we will be able to establish our thesis in a more precise and contextual discussion of Calvin’s eschatology.

For this purpose, we will search, first, for the similarities between Calvin’s words and ideas, and those of his predecessors and contemporaries, by comparing their writings both theological and exegetical. Secondly, and more significantly, we will follow the methodological suggestion given by Calvin himself in order to understand his thought.

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which is about the relationship of the *Institutes* to the biblical commentaries. It is necessary for understanding Calvin’s theology as a whole not only to take both works together into consideration, but also to examine them separately. This is particularly important in treatment of such a topic as eschatology because it has many biblical passages as proof texts most of which are often ambiguous or difficult to interpret.  

Finally, I will deal with Calvin’s teaching on last things basically in the chronological order. There are two reasons for this. First, it is a well-known fact that Calvin’s *opus magnum*, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, has its own history of development. Consequently, one might expect a certain development, if not a change, in his theological thinking by exploring differences between its editions. Secondly, if we take seriously Calvin’s sensitivity of the literally genre as noted above, the chronological treatment of his theology is essential. In his career as a Reformer, Calvin published only one biblical commentary, that is, *Commentary on the Romans* before 1546, ten years after his first *Institutes*; moreover, some significant lectures on the Old Testament prophets, as

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77 Cf. Balke’s comment: “Often one only takes the *Institution* into account, while Calvin’s dynamic eschatological vision is expressed much more strongly in his commentaries” (“Some Characteristics of Calvin’s Eschatology” 32), though he pursues it neither thoroughly nor historically.


79 *Commentary on the First Corinthians*.

80 Minor Prophets (1559); Daniel (1561); Jeremiah and Lamentations (1563); and Ezekiel (1565).
well as commentaries on the Pentateuch,\textsuperscript{81} were published only after the final edition of the Institutes! This fact is crucial, again, to understand Calvin’s eschatology. Imagine the difference between the understanding of present and future world of a young convert from Catholicism, who has just started his theological carrier, and on the other hand, that of the matured Genevan Reformer who has profoundly learned through his study of the New and Old Testament books, and who is now giving his last lectures on the book of Ezekiel. However, since it is not our purpose to discuss every detail in Calvin’s voluminous commentaries, I will choose some biblical passages which seem to me best to illustrate the characteristic of his teaching on last things.

1.4. Outline

The dissertation consists of two chronologically divided sections: the first deals with Calvin’s early works up to 1543, the year the third edition of the Institutes was published; the second with the later ones including some posthumous publications. In section one, I will start with a examination of how Calvin himself understood and formulated his own position of last things by way of the dialogue with theological works of his predecessors and contemporaries, looking at his earliest works such as the first Institutes and Catechism (chapter 2); the 1539 Institutes and Commentary on the Romans (chapter 3); and Psychopannychia (chapter 4).

In section 2, I will examine how Calvin interprets eschatological and so-called apocalyptic passages in Scripture by comparing with other exegetical traditions. Following

\textsuperscript{81} 1563. \textit{Comm. Joshua} (1564).
roughly the chronological order of publication, I will first consider his biblical
commentaries on the New Testament books as well as some early Old Testament
commentaries (chapter 5), and then the Old Testament prophets (chapter 7), though I will
insert a discussion of the final edition of the *Institutes* (chapter 6).
PART I
CHAPTER 2
ESCHATOLOGY IN CALVIN’S EARLY WRITINGS

It is for sure that young Calvin who has just converted from Catholicism also had his own view of the last things even in the beginning of his career. In this chapter, we will explore his eschatology showed in his earliest works and how he formulated it by way of the dialogue with theological works of his predecessors and contemporaries.

2.1. The Preface to the French Translation of the New Testament (1535)

The impact of the Gospel, having been rediscovered by Martin Luther\(^1\), certainly affected a young French humanist, though the date of his conversion is still uncertain. We can observe it very clearly in one of the Calvin’s earliest theological works\(^2\): *A tous amateurs de Iésus Christ, et de son S. Evangile, salut.*\(^3\) This long neglected work of Calvin\(^4\)


\(^2\) Calvin’s earliest theological work is probably *Psychopannychia*. However, as Calvin himself testifies in its 1536 introduction, this treatise was revised, corrected, and eventually published in 1542. Although it is quite certain that it does include Calvin’s earliest theological thoughts, it is simply impossible to distinguish them from later revisions and corrections. Therefore, I am at the opinion that we should basically deal with this treatise according to its publication date. See, Doumergue, *Jean Calvin*, I:466; Millet, *Calvin et la dynamique de la parole*, 442; and most recently, Richard A. Muller’s extensive discussion on the issue in “The Starting Point of Calvin’s Theology: An Essay-Review,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 36 (2001), 314-341. We, therefore, will deal with this treatise extensively in chapter 4.

\(^3\) CO9:791-822. This preface was anonymous at first, yet from 1545 on was connected with a name of Calvin. As we shall see later, it is no doubt from the judgment of its content that this was done by him. Another French text is edited by Jacques Pannier as *Jean Calvin, Epître à tous Amateurs de Jésus-Christ, préface à la traduction française de Nouveau Testament par Robert Olivetan (1535) (le plus ancien texte français de Calvin qui ait été imprimé) avec Introduction sur Une edition française de L’institution dès 1537?* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1929).
was originally served as a preface to the New Testament of the French translation of the Bible by his cousin Olivetan\(^5\) published in 1535. Although Calvin also wrote its Latin version, it was, as its title suggests, written for emperor, kings, princes, and scholars.\(^6\) The Latin version, whose content is similar to the last part of the French one, insists on the necessity of the Bible for all believers, and thus reminds us of Erasmus’ prefaces to the New Testament,\(^7\) especially its “Paraclesis.” Being different significantly from Calvin’s Latin preface, the French one positively provides a summary of the whole Scripture for readers.

In this French preface, Calvin, having described the perfect situation of creation and the fall and misery of human beings, develops the salvation history of the loving God. To the unfaithful Israelites and idolatrous pagans who responded perversely against the divine revelations, nonetheless, God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, in order to establish the new covenant with his people and restore the world. This promise and hope had already been given to Adam right after his fall, repeated to the patriarchs, and

\(^4\) Ganoczy, in his *The Young Calvin*, highly praises it: “One must admit that the preface is a masterpiece of literary clarity and at the same time a magnificent testimony of a positive and enthusiastic evangelical spirit. One cannot read it without emotion. Contrary to the almost harsh tone of the Latin preface, its tone could be called ‘doxological’”(96) and “I consider it a document of capital importance for understanding Calvin’s evolution”(98). To my knowledge, the same author does not give a further analysis on the treatise.


\(^7\) *Novum Instrumentum omne*...(1516) has three prefaces: *Paraclesis ad lectorem pium, Methodus*, and *Apologia*. 
proclaimed by prophets more clearly testifying the coming of Messiah. At the same time, God showed by means of the Law and ceremonies his grace which would be brought by the Messiah, and through the reign of kings his Kingdom. In the fulfillment of time, this promised Messiah appeared. The New Testament is the book about Him.  

Then, Calvin describes Christ and his Gospel that the New Testament witnesses. After defining the terms “New Testament” and “Gospel,” he denotes that the testimony of the New Testament that Christ is given “for us (pour nous)” and that Jesus is the Messiah, is certain because it is testified by God [the voice from heaven], as well as angels, Simeon, John the Baptist, all apostles, and the works of Christ himself. Thus, Calvin assuredly declares that we will be heirs of the Kingdom of God through Jesus Christ given by the new covenant, though he also asks his readers, who are called “Christians,” if they deprive and ruin the covenant. Then, the beautiful eulogy of the Gospel, as it were, is followed. It is through hearing and understanding this Gospel that the living faith, with sure hope and love for God and neighbors, shall be given. Therefore, Calvin admonishes, we should cease working for the mortal body, but seek for the “immortal and incorruptible life, eternal and
inestimable beatitude, and treasures of Paradise (la vie immortelle et incorruptible, de la beatitude éternelle et inestimable, de tous les thresors de paradis).”

Since the mystery of God, that is, the heavenly wisdom, is revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whoever wants to be his disciple has to follow his way. Although it is the way of afflictions, it eventually attains the glory. What we rather patiently hope for is “the sovereign judgment of God (le grand jugement de Dieu)” because it is the moment when all human attempts will be overthrown and the Kingdom of God will appear.

And it is when Jesus Christ shall appear in his majesty with the angels. Then, it shall be that the good and the evil shall be present before the judgment seat of this great King. Those who have remained firm in this testament, who have followed and kept the will of this good Father, shall be at his right hand as his true children, and shall receive benediction with the fulfillment of their faith, which shall be eternal salvation. And since they were not ashamed to own and confess Jesus Christ, when he was despised and condemned before men, they shall also participate in his glory, and shall be crowned with him eternally.

Those who despised and rejected the Gospel, however, will receive the eternal death as their reward. It is through Jesus Christ presented by this Gospel that treasures of the paradise was opened, the riches of God disclosed, and the eternal life revealed. Christ is the beginning, the way, and the end of our salvation. The great figures in the Old Testament, like Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Melchizedek, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and

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11 CO9:809.

12 Calvin, A tous amateurs, “… Et que Iesus Christ apparoistra en sa maieste avec les anges. Alors fauldra que bons et mauvais soient presentz devant le siege judicial de ce grand Roy. Ceulx qui seront demourez fermes en ce Testament, et aurint suyvi et garde la volunte de ce bon pere, ilz seront a la dextre come vrays enfans, et recevront benediction, la fin de leur foy: qui sera le salut eternel. Et d’autant qu’ilz n’auront point eu honte de advouer et confesser Iesus Christ, du temps qu’il estoit mesprise et contemne devant les hommes: Aussi ilz seront participans de sa gloire, couronnez avec luy eternallement” (CO9:811).
Samson, are types of Christ himself.\textsuperscript{13} We can find all of our blessings in Him just because the great exchange has occurred in Christ.\textsuperscript{14} Accordingly, if Christ lives in us, we do not belong to this world even though we are in it. This wisdom, Calvin concludes, is our goal.

In the last portion of the treatise, Calvin appeals to kings and principals that they be obliged to spread this holy doctrine, to the bishop that, if he is a true successor of the apostles gifted in speaking every tongue, he should not deprive the pasture of Christ’s sheep, that is, not prevent Christians of reading and hearing the Gospel in their own language, but rather inquire means of teaching with pure words of God.\textsuperscript{15} Calvin closes this French preface with a brief prayer and the words of Mark 1:15.

As this rather long summary clearly shows, Calvin acknowledges the whole Scriptures as one great history of salvation whose center is Jesus Christ, as presented in the Gospel. Calvin is full of conviction that all the treasure in Christ, which is brought through faith in the Gospel, is not only for the people in the biblical age but also “for us” in Calvin’s time. We can see here the spirit not just of a humanist showing off his achievements, but of a reformer who wills to spread the Gospel, the heavenly wisdom, to

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\textsuperscript{13} The view is a theological and exegetical tradition since the ancient church. For Joseph, see, Irenaeus, \textit{Fragments} 17 (ANF1:571); Tertullian, \textit{Adversus Judaeos} 10:6-7 (CCSL II/2:1376); Chrysostom, \textit{Homilia 61} (PG54.528); and Ambrose, \textit{De Joseph} (PL14.637-672). For Solomon, Ambrose, \textit{Apologia Altera prophetae David IV} (PL14.893-897). For Samson, Augustine, \textit{Sermo de Sansone} (Sermon 364: PL39.1639-45). According to Preus, for Perez all the fathers of the Old Testament were figures of Christ. See, James S. Preus, \textit{From Shadow to Promise: Old Testament Interpretation from Augustine to the Young Luther} (Harvard University, 1969), 115.

\textsuperscript{14} Calvin, \textit{A tous amateurs}, “Car il s’est humilie pour nous exalter, il s’est asservy pour nous affranchir, il s’est apaovry pour nous enrichir, il a este vendu pour nous racheter, captif pour nous deliverer, condanne pour nous absouldre, il a este desfigure pour nousfigurer, il est mort pour nostre vie. Tellement que par luy rudesse est adoulcie, courroux appaise, tenebres esclaircies, iniustice iustifiee---, abysme abysme, enfer enferre, mort morte, mortalite immortelle” (CO9:813).

\textsuperscript{15} This portion of the French version duplicates much of the Latin preface, in a shorter form though.
his fellow people in their mother tongue. It is, therefore, not difficult to find similar ideas and rhetorical expressions in his other early works such as *Psychopannychia* and the first edition of the *Institutes*.16

From the survey of Calvin’s preface to the French translation of the New Testament, it seems to me, two things are obvious. First, as I stated earlier, its views of the Bible and the Gospel are quite similar to those of Luther’s. In fact, the preface itself closely resembles Luther’s introduction to the New Testament17 in many ways though the latter is more succinct.18 Like Calvin, though chronologically the other way round, of course, Luther starts his preface with definitions of the terms of “Gospel” and “New Testament.” He describes the Gospel as the wealth of Christ given to believers, the life of Christ swallowing up death, the righteousness of Christ forgiving sins, and the blessings of Christ which even the eternal damnation cannot overcome. After stating that this Gospel

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16 For examples in the *Institutes* (1536), “Ubi diem Domini expectemus, quo in gloriām coelestis regni Dei, receptis incorruptis corporibus, transferemur” (OS 1:61); “Fiducia enim haec nostra est, quod Christus, filius Dei, noster est, nobisque datus: ut in ipso simus et nos filii Dei, regni coelestis haeredes: Dei benignitate, non nostra arte, vocati in spem aeternae salutis” (OS 1:63); “Hoc parum est: quod talem eius participationem adepti, ut simus adhuc in nobis stulti, ipse nobis coram Deo sapientia est; ut peccatores simus, ipse est nobis justitia; ut immundi simus, ipse est nobis sanctificatio…; ut corpus mortis adhuc nobiscum circumferamus, ipse tamen nobis vita est. Breviter, quod omnia illius nostra sunt et nos in eo omnia, in nobis nōhīl” (OS 1:63); “…nihil haesitemus, quin nobis Christus sit Jesus, hoc est, salvator; quin, ut per ipsum peccatorum remissionem ac sanctificationem obtinemus ita salus quoque data sit; ut tandem perducamur in regnum Dei, quod ultimo die revelabitur. Atque hoc quidem caput est et fere summa eorum omnium, quae sacro suo verbo nobis offert ac promittit Dominus; haec meta, quam nobis in scripturis suis statuit, hic scopus quem proponit…. Rursum, ut significaret ad supremum usque diem quo libri aperientur, sublimiora esse, quam quae sensu nostro percipi, aut oculis spectari, manu ve contracti possint…” (OS 1:69). We will treat the work of *Psychopannychia* later. For further discussion about the relationship between those two treatises, see, Jacques Pannier ed., *Jean Calvin, Epître à tous Amateurs de Jésus-Christ, préface à la traduction française de Nouveau Testament par Robert Olivetan (1535)* (le plus ancien texte français de Calvin qui ait été imprimé) avec *Introduction sur Une edition française de L’institution dès 1537*? (Paris: Fischbacher, 1929)

17 W.A., *Deutsche Bibel*, Bd. 6, 1-11.

18 For the significance of the prefaces of Luther’s Bible in the history of the translated Bibles’ introductions, see Maurice E. Schild, *Abend ländische Bibelvorreden bis zur Lutherbibel* (Gütersloh, 1970), particularly 170ff. and 267-273 for those in the time of Reformation.
and the covenant have been repeatedly promised through prophets in the Old Testament, Luther refers to a promise in chapter 3 of Genesis (3:15), the renewal of the promise with Abraham, and, among many other prophecies, Micah 5:2 which also Calvin mentions. For Luther, the Gospel is Christ himself and the preaching about him who has broken the power of sin and hell for all believers through his death and resurrection. This gospel requires from us only faith by which we acquire the power of Christ’s death and victory, and thus we are justified, vivified, and blessed. Those who believe this gospel should testify and confess it, and devote their body, wealth, and honor for it because, by way of seeing what Christ has done for us, they would have will and love in their mind to devote their life and to imitate and follow the model of Christ.

These similarities, however, do not necessarily mean that Calvin used Luther’s preface as a single source of his description of the Gospel even though it is no doubt, as Schild states, that Luther was epoch-making in formulating a Protestant tradition of the evangelistic understanding of the Bible. Prior to Calvin’s preface, Melanchthon had written chapters on “the Gospel” and “the power of the Gospel” in his Loci communes, and both Zwingli and Farel also wrote in his introduction to the Christian faith a chapter

19 For Genesis 3:15, see also, Melanchthon, Loci communes theologici (CR21:140).

20 See, Schild, Bibelvorreden, 266.


on “the Gospel.” Some scholars indicate that the *heilsgeschichtliche* understanding in Calvin’s preface resembles Bullinger’s small treatise on covenant. Accordingly, it might be better to assume that the exposition of the Gospel in the preface is a kind of manifestation through which Calvin positively presented the common understanding of the Scripture from the evangelical perspective, and by doing so he showed himself as an approver of it. It is also probable that in writing a preface to the French Bible Calvin learned from the renowned preface to the German Bible. In any case, it seems apparent that the assurance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ filled in the small treatise came to be a foundation and a starting point of the young French reformer’s views of the Scriptures, and thus his eschatological thought. We can see here clearly, like in the case of Luther and others, Calvin’s farewell to the medieval eschatology by means of the Gospel of Christ.

The second point observable from Calvin’s preface, that is more important for our discussion, is its teleological or eschatological character particularly in comparison with Luther’s. Calvin starts writing the evangelical history in the Bible with the original state of human creation, that is, the state in which the glorious light shines brightly in human beings.

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24 Backus and Chimelli point out that Calvin’s treatise looks similar in style with Estienne’s preface to the Vulgate (*Biblia: Brevesin eadem annotations ex doctissimis interpretationibus et Hebraeorum commentariis*, 1532); and in its content with a Bullinger’s work (*De testamento seu foedere Dei unico et aeterno Heinrychi Bullingeri brevis expositio*, 1534). See, *La Vraie Piété: Divers traits de Jean Calvin et Confession de foi de Guillaume Farel*, ed. Irena Backus and Claire Chimelli (Geneva, 1986), 17-23. Cf. de Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin*, 91 and Peter A. Lillback, *The Binding of God: Calvin’s Role in the Development of Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids, 2001), 165. It seems to me, however, that the Bullinger’s firm and coherent view of the Scriptures, which is developed out of an axis of the covenant, cannot be seen in Calvin’s preface even if the former gave some influences upon the latter’s later works. We will come back to the issue and explore particularly the relationship between the Old and New Testaments when we discuss the 1539 edition of the *Institutes*.

25 A question is how well Calvin could read German, or if Luther’s German prefaces had been translated into Latin.
formed in God’s image.26 Although it was once lost through their fall, it is now restored by
the Gospel of Christ. Through him, we can be citizen of heaven and heirs of his Kingdom
because the Gospel is the key of God’s wisdom to open the gate of the heaven,27 and also
because to know the only true God and Jesus Christ sent by Him is the eternal life for us.28
For Calvin, the Gospel is the means not only for forgiveness and liberation from the
punishment, but also for restoration of the original state of human beings and attainment to
the goal of them.

The expression “to know God” in Calvin’s 1537 Instruction and the Genevan
Catechism, which we will see later, almost certainly indicates this archetypal state of
human beings. It is not merely an intellectual recognition but worshipping God,29 and thus
is the ultimate purpose of human creation.30 This understanding of “knowledge” or
“wisdom” most likely originated from Augustine. In the introduction to his Enchiridion,
Augustine states that the wisdom of human beings is piety, that is, in turn, to worship
God.31 Erasmus inherited this idea,32 and Calvin himself in fact refers to it in his

26 Calvin, A tous amateurs, “…il l’avoyt forme a son image et semblance, tellement que la limiere de
da gloire reluysoit clairement en luy”(CO9:791).

27 CO9:807. See, n.10.

28 CO9:813.

29 See, Calvin, Instruction, “layant cogneue, que layons sur tout en estime et que lhonorions de toute
crainte amour et reverence”(OS 1:378. Cf. OS 1:379-380) and Genevan Catechism, Q6-7(OS 2:75. OS
version is based on the Latin edition of the catechism).

30 Calvin, Instruction, “…nous sommes tous creez a ceste fin que nous cognoissions la maieste de
nostre Createur”(OS 1:378) and Genevan Catechism, Q1-2, “Quoniam nos ideo creavit, et collocavit in hoc
mundo, quo glorificetur in nobis”(OS 2:75).

31 Augustine, Enchiridion, 1:2.

32 On Erasmus’ view of ‘pietas,’ see O’Malley’s introduction to Collected Works of Erasmus
(University of Toronto, 1988), vol.66, xi-xxx.
Commentary on Seneca’s *De Clementia* by quoting Augustine. What is significant here, however, is that Calvin related the idea to the creation purpose, which is in turn the goal of salvation history.

It might also be good to mention here Calvin’s view of the Christian life as *imitatio Christi* in the preface. Those who belong to Christ must go in this world through the same way as Christ did, that is, the way of afflictions. This probably very much reflects such late medieval spirituality as *devotio moderna* which is represented especially in Erasmus’ works. Calvin goes further, however. That way of afflictions, nevertheless, surely reaches the glory, which will be revealed at the Christ’s return and the last judgment.

For Calvin, the human history with which believers’ histories are interwoven is the history that is heading toward the goal. His description of the last things in the preface, thus, neither wonders from the Scripture to fall into speculations, nor changes the

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33 L. Annae Senecae...libri duo de clementia...commentariis illustrati I:13 (CO5:102). The quotation from Augustine is *De civitate dei* (10:1:3).

34 On the relationship between this point and Calvin’s *meditatio futurae vitae*, cf., Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 63.

35 See, for instance, Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (LB V:23A): “Si in mundos es, in Christo non es…. Sin ambitionem, delitiass, cupiditatem, libidinem, mundum dicas, profecto si mundanus es, Christianus non es. Omnibus dixit Christus, qui crucem suam non tolleret, ac sua vestigia se queretur, non esse se dignum.” Cf., also, the following descriptions of Calvin’s first edition of *The Institutes*: “…omnia semel dicuntur, cum ostenditur quod tales velit Christus discipulos qui semetipsos abnegent, et sublata sua cruce ipsum sequantur"(OS 1:64) and “Quamobrem nihil obest, quominus vitam aeternam, remunerationem scripturae exemplo vocemus, quod in ea Dominus suos ex laboribus in quietem, ex afflictione in consolationem…. breviter, quae perpessi sunt mala, bonis maioribus permutet. Sic et nihil erit incommodi, si vitae sanctitatem existimemus esse viam, non quidem quae ducat, sed qua electi a Deo suo in gloriam regni coelestis ducantur: quoniam haec bona eius voluntas est, glorificare quos sanctificavit”(OS 1:67). This Calvin’s view of the Christian life will be fully developed and eventually expanded into the last chapter of the 1539 Institutes, which we shall discuss later.

36 See, n.12 (CO9:811).
Gospel of Jesus Christ to the fearful threat, but is always colored with hope for the restoration to the archetypal state of creation and for its completion.

2.2. The Preface to the Homilies of Chrysostom

It would be meaningful to take a glance here at Calvin’s another preface, that is to the *Homilies of Chrysostom* which he edited by himself presumably in the same year as the preface considered above.  

37 It is no wonder that there are many similarities between these two prefaces. According to the preface, it is only when we come to recognize the power of Christ and receive Him offered through the Gospel by the Father that we can truly enjoy Him; and our souls are nourished by this doctrine of salvation toward the life eternal.  

38 Thus, Calvin here again calls the doctrine, that is the Gospel, “the heavenly wisdom.”  

39 This fact indicates not only that he wrote these two prefaces in succession, but that a certain understanding of the Gospel seemed to have been established in him at this period.

Another notable thing in this treatise is Calvin’s basic attitude for the biblical interpretation and his sensitivity to literary genre. Describing the reason why he chose


38 CO9:831-832.

39 CO9:832.
Chrysostom’s homilies among others, Calvin raises readers’ attention to what literary genre he is now dealing with. In his judgment, as far as doctrinal matters are concerned, Augustine is far better than any other Fathers. He is even a great spiritual interpreter of the Scriptures. However, for the purely simple exposition of the biblical texts, which Calvin regards as an ideal interpretation, he believes that Chrysostom is best. Interestingly, Calvin differs on this point from Erasmus who considers the spiritual interpretation more significant than the literal. Although it may be an interesting topic to explore how the difference affects their views on the last things, it goes too far from our study.

2.3. The 1536 *Institutes of Christian Religion*

Calvin’s early theological development bore full fruit in his *Christianae Religionis Institutio*: totam fere pietatis summam et quidquid est in doctrina salutis cognitum necessarium complectens, omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus ac recens

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40 “Ex interpretibus Divinae Scripturae eos potissimum delige, qui a littera quam maxime recedunt. Cujusmodi sunt in primis post Paulum Origenes, Ambrosius, Hieronymus, Augustinus. Video enim neotericos Theologos litterae nimium libenter inhaerere, & captiosis quibusdam argutiis, magis quam erudendis mysteriis operam dare, quasi vero non vere dixerit Paulus, legem nostram spiritualem esse” (Enchiridion, LB V:8D). In *Ratio verae theologicae* (LB V:133A), he adds Basil, Gregorius of Nazianzen, Athanasian, Cyril, Chrysostom, and Hilary. It is also said that the Johannine or Pauline distinction of flesh and spirit structures Erasmus’ eschatology (Erasmus, *Works* 66:xxiv) so that it does not have “the cosmic terrors of the ‘last day,’ the *dies irae*.” The difference of hermeneutic may suggest the difference of their world views between Erasmus and Calvin: the world is closed Christendom for the former, it is openended for the latter. Cf. also Hoffman, *Rhetoric and Theology*, p.103ff.

41 See, however, our discussion in chapter 4 on *meditatio futurae vitae*, especially difference between Erasmus and Calvin.

42 There is a study which has the exact same title: Calvins *Eschatologie in der Erstausgabe “Christianae Religionis Institutio”* 1536 by Alfons Fischer (Bamberg, 1995). Yet, since this is a theological reflection by re-reading the whole treatise from the eschatological perspective, it is of little help for our historical approach.
In his introductory epistle to Francis the first, Calvin argues against those who criticize the evangelicals and doubt their doctrine of the Gospel, by stating that the true doctrine can be judged by whether or not it is worth devoting our lives for it. He also writes that the Gospel is the doctrine which wipes out even the fear of death and the divine judgment.

Moreover, one of the characteristics of the first Institutes is that, although it basically has a catechetical structure consisting of the Law, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer, it sets off the whole discussion, even prior to the exposition of the Law itself, with the summary of the Gospel. Calvin convincingly states that it is Christ by whom whether we will obtain all the heavenly treasures or worth the judgment of the eternal death is determined so that Christ is the only way to God the Father and the eternal blessing. Then, Calvin moves to the exposition of the Decalogue. In other words, he seems to put

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43 OS 1:11-283.

44 Calvin, Inst (1536), “Verum ut ut in eius incertitudinem ludant, si sua illis proprio sanguine vitaque dispendio obsignanda esset, licet spectare, quanti ab illis fiat. Longe alia nostra fiducia est, quae nec mortis terrores, nec Dei tribunal formidat” (OS 1:26). As mentioned above, we can see here Calvin’s conviction of Christ’s Gospel like Luther. As to the doctrine of purgatory, however, Calvin even goes further when he clearly writes, criticizing the silence about the doctrine probably in the Augsburg Confession, that purgatory is a fiction of Satan and is simply a blasphemy against Christ” (OS 1:200).

45 The catechetical structure of Calvin’s first Institutes was probably based on or strongly influenced by Luther’s works, namely, his larger and smaller catechisms, the Babylonian Captivity of the Church, and the Freedom of a Christian, as Alexandre Ganoczy points out in his The Young Calvin (137ff.).

46 Calvin begins his Institutes with descriptions of the double recognition of God and of man (cf. Luther’s lectures on Psalm 50 [WA40/I.327.11-328.2]), the Law, and the Gospel. These are nothing but the essence of the first chapters of Paul’s book of Romans.

47 OS 1:40-41.

48 OS 1:41.
intentionally the goal or the way to go at first before entering the discussions of individual doctrines per se.

This teleological structure of the first *Institutes*, as we will see in his *Instruction* and the *Genevan Catechism* as well, appears not common in Calvin’s time. For instance, Luther’s two catechisms, larger and smaller, begin immediately with the explanation of the Decalogue;\(^{49}\) Bucer begins with the description of the present state of a baptized man.\(^{50}\) It seems that the teleological tendency of Calvin’s writings, catechetical literatures in particular, is primarily for the educational purpose, but also based on his view of the salvation-history of the Scriptures.

In order to explore young Calvin’s eschatological thoughts in the 1536 *Institutes* in its historical context, we first have to limit topics and literary genre to deal with. The topics are the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, articles on Christ and last things (“resurrection of the body” and “the life everlasting”) of the Creed, the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer (“Thy Kingdom come”), and the Lord’s Supper. As for literary genre, we regard the first *Institutes* as a primer or a catechism as Calvin himself recognized.\(^{51}\) It may, therefore, be compared with his other catechisms,\(^{52}\) and then with other catechetical works

\(^{49}\) Cf. Martin Luther, *Der Kleine Catechism* (1529).


\(^{51}\) Calvin, *Inst* (1536), “Hanc mihi fuisse propositam rationem liber ipse loquitur, ad simplicem scilicet rudemque docendi formam appositus” (OS 1:21). As the title of the 1538 Latin edition of the *Instruction (Catechismus, sive christianae religionis institutio)*... clearly shows, Calvin at this stage does not distinguish terms of “catechismus” and “institutio.” I simply put the *Institutes* without prefixes like “the first” or “the 1536” in the following discussion, otherwise noticed.

\(^{52}\) *Instruction et confession de foy dont on use en l’ègle de Gèneve*, 1537 (OS 1:378-417), and *Catechismus ecclesiae Genevensis, hoc est, formula erudiendi pueros in doctrina Christi*, 1545 (OS 2:72-
primarily written before 1536, those by the hands of Calvin’s predecessors and contemporaries such as: Augustine, Aquinas, Kolde, Erasmus, Luther, Melanchthon, Zwingli, Bucer, and Hubmaier.

151). We need to use the latter with some carefulness, not only because it was published almost ten years later after the first Institutes, but also because it was certainly influenced by the Institutes of 1539–43 and many debates in between. Nonetheless, as far as the basic content of the catechism is concerned, there is no significant change between them as we shall see below. For the relationship among the early Institutes, the Instruction, and the Catechism, see Muller’s Unaccommodated Calvin, 26-27 (197 n.39) and 119-120.


54 Augustine, De fide et symbolo (PL40, 181-196) and Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide spe et caritate (PL40, 231-290).

55 Thomas Aquinas, “Les collationes in decem preceptis de Saint Thomas d’Aquin” in Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Theologiques, vol.69, 5-40 and 227-263; “In symbolum apostolorum scilicet ‘credo in Deum’ expositio” and “In orationem Dominicam videlicet ‘Pater noster’ expositio” in Opuscula theologica (Marietti, 1954), vol.2 (De re spirituali), 193-217 and 221-235, respectively.


57 Desiderius Erasmus, Explanatio symboli apostolorum sive catechismus, 1533 (ASD v-1:203-320).

58 Luther, Der Kleine Katechism and Der Große Katechismus in Unser Glaube: Die Bekennnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (Gutersloh, 1991).


60 Huldrych Zwingli, In expositionem fidei ad regem Christianam, 1531 (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5, 1-163).


Many studies on influences upon or assumed sources of the *Institutes* itself have been done. Our purpose, however, is not necessarily to explore direct influences or sources for the treatise though we appreciate former studies, but to contextualize the early Calvin’s eschatological teachings and to clarify their characteristics in the history of theology and spirituality represented especially in catechetical works.

2.3.1. *The Fourth Commandment in the Decalogue*

In the *Institutes*, the *Instruction*, and the *Catechism*, Calvin furnishes the longest explanation for this commandment in his exposition of the Decalogue. According to Calvin, the true Sabbath is that we rest our own work in order to have God stay and rule inside us through his Spirit, and it is still valid while its external observance was abolished by Christ’s coming. In accordance with chapter 4 of the epistle to the Hebrews, Calvin calls the true Sabbath “the perpetual Sabbath,” which we have already partaken partially yet not completely. It will come to its completion when God will be all in all.

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64 Calvin, *Inst* (1536), “Id[Regnum] autem est verum sabbatum, cuius typus ac velut umbra iudaicum illud fuit…. Qua docemur: sabbatum nobis a Deo perpetuum mandari et quod nullo termino finiatur, deinde, nunquam fore ut plene et ad iustum modum sanctificetur usque ad septimum diem. Ille vero dies septimus ultimus est et aeternus, in quem licet pro parte ingressi simus, quicunque sumus fideles, nondum tamen plene pervenimus” (OS 1:47). In *Instruction*, it also calls “perpetual sabbath” and teaches that we meditate it through our whole lives (OS 1:386). Cf. *Catechismus*, Q166-184.
The internal or spiritual understanding of the Sabbath is also observable in the catechisms of Aquinas, Erasmus, and Luther. Luther particularly emphasizes obeying the divine words for the internal Sabbath. However, the most similar view to Calvin’s is, as Ganoczy points out, that of Melanchthon. In his exposition of the third (=fourth) commandment in the 1521 edition of *Loci communes*, Melanchthon describes exactly the same points as Calvin made (Calvin followed Melanchthon, of course), and refers to “the perpetual Sabbath.” One difference between them is that Melanchthon does not consider the commandment in terms of the discussion in *Hebrews* 4, while Calvin does mention the perfection of the seventh day.

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65 OS 1:47.

66 Aquinas, “Et expectamus requiem de tribus: de labore presentis uite, de temptationum concussione et de dyaboli seruitute” (“Les collationes in decem preceptis,” 235). Thomas also describes three things what we should do on the Sabbath, and the third reads this: “Tertio in diuinorum exercitiis…. Et hoc propter quietem anime; sicut enim corpus fatigatum quietem desiderat, sic et anima. Locus anime Deus est…. Set antequam ad hanc quietem perueniat anima oportet tres quietes precedere. Prima est ab inquietudine peccati…; secunda a passionibus carnis…; tertia ab occupationibus mundi…” (ibid., 239).

67 Erasmus, *Explanatio symboli* (ASD v-1:310): “CA. Vere piis omnis dies dominicus est, non quod simper abstineat ab externis operibus, sed quod omni die quoties datur oportunitas frequenter attollit animum in Deum, fidem excitans, charitatem extimulans, spem acuens, hymnis laudans, aliquid petens salutiferum, pro omnibus gratias agens.”

68 Cf. the related questions in Luther’s small and larger Catechisms.

69 In his exposition of the Decalogue, Thomas teaches the reason why the Sabbath must be sanctified, three things to avoid, and three things to do (cf. the negative and positive meanings of the Decalogue!), and counts “studying the divine words” as one of the things to do (“Les collationes in decem preceptis,” 238).

70 Ganoczy, *Young Calvin*, 146-147.

It is not only Melanchthon who employs the concept of “the perpetual Sabbath” prior to Calvin, but also Hubmaier in his 1527 catechism and Erasmus in his 1533 explanation of the Creed. Further, in the catechism published in the same year as Calvin’s Instruction, Bucer teaches the consummation in the seventh day or the last day and states that we can reach the blessings of “the eternal peace and rest,” for which we prepare by way of our delightful observance of the holy day.

We may therefore conclude that the eschatological point of view in Calvin’s understanding of the Sabbath is not his original but common to his contemporaries. About the source of this view, it is undoubtedly based on the teaching in Hebrews 4. On the other hand, however, it seems to me that the usage of the term “perpetual Sabbath” and its connection to the consummation of the whole creation comes from a theological heritage since the ancient church, especially the Letter of Barnabas and Augustine. For Augustine,

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72 Hubmaier, Eine christliche Lehrtafel, 319: “der mensch hat einen ewigenn Sabbat, den sole er teglich vnnd on vnderlaßs feyren, sich von den sünden enthalten, vnnd Got in sich wirckenn lassen.”

73 Erasmus, Explanatio symboli (ASD v-1:309): “Audis hic tria quodammodo sabbata. Primum fuit solius Dei sine nobis. Secundum est nostrum per illius beneficentiam, sed imperfectum in hac vita. Tertium est absolutum in futuro seculo.” On three Sabbaths, see above, n.66. In Thomas’s exposition of the Decalogue, even though he seems to refer to the eternal Sabbath as the completion of the creation in a certain context, the term ‘eternal Sabbath’ itself does not appear. He considers, however, the rest in God as “eternal delight” and prays that God bring us to the rest (“Les collationes in decem preceptis,” 239).

74 Bucer, Der kürzzer Catechismus, “Das[zu seinem heiligen wort und dem gepette müssigen und hertzlich begeben sollen] thu mit sllem ernst, so förderstu dich zu der ewigen ruwe und zu dem Sabbath, den du im Herren haben wurst, wann auch du nun die feier erlangest von den weltlichen und vergenglichen dingen, Ja von allen geschöffen Gottes, die er die sechs tag schuffe, wann nun Gott würt alles in allen sein” (MBDS, Bd.6/3, 214/217). Note that Calvin also quotes the words of 1 Cor 15:28, which Bucer mentions in the last sentence above, in the same context.

75 The Epistle of Barnabas 15:7, “See that we shall indeed keep it holy at that time, when we enjoy true rest, when we shall be able to do so because we have been made righteous ourselves and have received the promise, when there is no more sin, but all things have been made new by the Lord” (tr. Kirsopp Lake, The Apostolic Fathers I in Loeb Classic Library).
the Christian Sabbath is spiritual,\textsuperscript{76} and the perpetual Sabbath is the true one.\textsuperscript{77} The history of the Kingdom is a path to this “perpetual Sabbath” and there it reaches its completion.\textsuperscript{78}

2.3.2. The Apostles’ Creed

a. Incarnation, suffering, and death of Christ

What is noteworthy in Calvin’s exposition of the articles on Christ’s works, first of all, is the so-called great exchange of Christ and us.\textsuperscript{79} The same thing can be seen both in the \textit{Instruction}\textsuperscript{80} and the \textit{Catechism}.\textsuperscript{81} As we have already mentioned above, this is one of the rhetorical devices which Calvin have preferably employed since his preface to the French New Testament.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{76} Cf. Augustine, \textit{Contra Faustum Manichaeum}, 16:28; and \textit{In Evangelium Ioannis tractatus}, III:19.

\textsuperscript{77} Cf. Augustine, \textit{Epistolae} 36 (11:25), and \textit{Confessionum} 36[51].

\textsuperscript{78} Augustine, \textit{De civita Dei} 22:30.

\textsuperscript{79} Calvin, \textit{Inst} (1536), “Passus est autem sub Pontio Pilato…, ut apud summi iudicis tribunal eius damnatione absolveremur. Crucifixus, ut in cruce…, quam peccata nostra meredabant. Mortuus, ut morte sua mortem vinceret, quae nobis imminebat, ac absorberet a qua absorbendi eramus. Sepultus, ut per eius gratiam peccato sepeliamur, a diaboli et mortis imperio liberati” (OS 1:82).

\textsuperscript{80} Calvin, \textit{Instruction}, “Car il a vestu nostre chair, affin que estant faict Filz dhomme il nous fist avec soy filz de Dieu, et que ayant receu sur soy nostre pouvrete il nous transferast ses richesses, ayant prins nostre imbecillite il nous confirmast de sa vertu, ayant receu nostre mortalite quil nous donnast son immortalite, estant descendu en terre quil nous eslevast au ciel” (OS 1:398).

\textsuperscript{81} Calvin, \textit{Cathechism}, Q51 “Christum ergo oportuissime hominem fieri dicis: ut, tanquam in persona nostra, salutis nostrae partes impleret. --- Ita sentio. Nam ab ipso mutuemur oportet, quidquid nobis apud nos deest: quod fieri aliter nequit”; A. to Q57 “Mortuus est, ut poena nobis debita defungeretur” (OS 2:82); A. to Q61 “Siquidem eam recipiendo abolevit: nec vero desiit interea esse benedictus, quo nos sua benedictione perfunderet” (OS 2:83).

\textsuperscript{82} See, n.10.
Thomas Aquinas also refers to an “exchange” through Christ’s incarnation. Kolde, in his brief exposition of the Creed, teaches that Christ’s love was “for us,” and elsewhere, citing a Gregorian prayer, mentions the exchange. Luther and Bucer describe grace and salvation brought by the fact that Jesus Christ has become “our Lord,” Zwingli too writes that “Christ and his all works are ours.” Even though all these teachings are not always as neatly described as Calvin’s, their basic doctrine is same. The view of Christ’s work “for us (pro nobis)” is the root of the Gospel taught in the Scriptures and expressed in such a creedal document the Nicene Creed. It would be meaningful to recall that Luther’s

83 Aquinas, “In symboolum apostolorum,” 201(906): “unde fecit quoddam commercium, scilicet quod assumpsit corpus animatum, et de Virgine nasci dignatus est, ut nobis largiretur suam deitatem; et sic factus est homo, ut hominem faceret Deum.” Even Sadolet says the same thing in his letter to Geneva (OS 1:445).

84 Kolde, Der Christenspiegel, 54, 56 (ch.3): “Ich geloeue dat hey darn a mit synem vrijen willen vyß groisser leifden vur vns arme sundigen myschens leis sich vangen van den boesen juden, ind alle die smachelit die sy eme an deden die leit hei in groisser geduldicheit als eyn vnrosel lam. Ind hey vur vns den bitteren doit an dem cruce, och der vnsprechicher leifden die hey tzo vns hadde” (italics mine).


86 Luther, Der Große Katechismus, 685-686 (738): “Das sei nun die Zusammenfassung dieses Artikels: Das Wörtlein >>Herr<< heißt einen, der uns vom Teufel zu Gott, vom Tod zum Leben, von der Sünde zur Gerechtigkeit gebracht hat und dabei erhält. …und dies alles dazu, daß er mein Herr würde; denn nichts von dem allein hat er für sich selbst getan noch dessen bedurft.” Luther also mentions in the twelfth section of his Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen, “der froliche Wechsel und Streit.”

87 Bucer, Der kürzer Catechismus, “[What are taught in the articles of Christ are] Was Christus, unser Herre, ist. Was er für uns worden ist. Was er für uns gelitten hat…” (MBDS, 6/3, 181).

88 Zwingli, In expositionem fidei (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5, 70-71): “Credimus ergo verum dei filium pro humana natura vere mortuum esse, quo certi reddamur de crimine nostrorum expiatione. Credimus et vere a mortuis resurrexisse, ut certi simus de eternal vita. Quicquid enim Christus est, noster est. …argumenti robur in hoc consistere, quod Christus noster est et quod omnis eius action nostra est.”

89 The Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed: “…τὸν δὲ θεὸν σωτηρὸν καὶ διὰ τὴν θεμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατέληθον εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς (qui propter nos homines et propter salutem nostram descendit de coelis)…”(italics mine).
discovery of the Gospel is exactly this “pro nobis.”

In fact, though it is at times regarded as the essence of the Luther’s theology, it is a theological statement prevailed at the end of the middle age. The great exchange told by Calvin, therefore, is an expression of the spiritual and theological tradition which was originated especially in Athanasius and has been developed in the West through Anselmian soteriology.

As for Christ’s descension into the hell, Calvin denies the Roman Catholic interpretation of “hell” as limbo. In the 1536 Institutes, it seems, Calvin still tries to take the term “hell” as literally as possible like Zwingli and Erasmus. Since the 1537 Instruction, however, Calvin has changed his interpretation, possibly following Bucer’s catechism, and regarded the term as “dreadful suffering” which Christ experienced. Although this is an interesting topic, we will not go further.

b. Resurrection, ascension, enthronement, and second coming of Christ

According to Calvin, the resurrection of Christ with body and soul is for our spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to the new life of righteousness, and is the

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90 Cf. discussions above (2.1.) on Calvin’s preface to the French translation of the New Testament.


92 Cf. Athanasius, De incarnatione verbi dei 54 with Thomas’ words in n.83 (“In symbolum apostolorum,” 201). We do not deal with the problem of divinization here.

93 Zwingli, In expositionem fidei (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5), 70.

94 Erasmus, Explanatio symboli (ASD v-1), 257-259.

95 Bucer, Der kürtzer Catechismus (MBDS, 6/3), 183. Cf. also, Bucer’s 1534 catechism, Kurtze schriftliche erklärung für die kinder und angöhdten… (MBDS, 6/3), 63.

96 For the history of interpretation of the same, see McNeil’s edition of the Institutes II.xvi.10.n.23.
substance of our own bodily resurrection. Through Christ’s ascension, the entrance to
heaven has been opened for us, and we possess the heaven in hope on behalf of him. This
was further secured by his enthronement because he has gotten the power to sanctify and
guide us to himself. Thus, his kingdom and its glory became our protection and power.
This heavenly Christ is always with his people in his spirit and power, and yet he will
appear in body at his return at the last day to judge the living and the dead according to
their works.97

Apart from some minor differences98, the explanation above is basically same as in
Calvin’s other catechisms. Significant differences, however, appear in the exposition of
Christ’s return. That of the Institutes is a mere series of scriptural verses. The Instruction,
on the other hand, after repeating the similar explanation of the Institutes, adds that Christ’s
return is for us “a precious comfort (une singuliere consolation).”99 The Genevan
Catechism even more intentionally insists that the last judgment is not fear at all for us
because the judge is our savior.100 The Catechism also touches a curious issue saying that
the substantial change of those bodies living at the last day into the resurrected ones, Calvin

97 OS 1:83-85.

98 For instance, the difference of number of points in the exposition on resurrection between the
Instruction (two points, OS 1:399) and the Catechism (three points, Q74/OS 2:86, as the 1539 Institutes); and
the difference of treatment of Christ’s mediatory work in heaven as the Institutes connects it to his
enthronement while both the Instruction (OS 1:399-400) and the Catechism (Q75-77/OS 2:86) to his
ascension.

99 Calvin, Instruction, “Et de cecy revient a nous une singuliere consolation, que nous entendons le
iugement estre commis a celluy duquel ladvenement ne nous peult estre sinon a salut” (OS 1:400).

100 Calvin, Cathechism, Q86 “An aliquod inde gaudium nostrae conscientiae, quod Christus
semel futurus sit mundi iudex? ---Recipient et quidem singulare. Certo enim non nisi in salutem nostram
venturum scimus”; Q87 “Non ergo reformidare nos convenit hoc iudicium, ut nobis horrorem incutiat. ---
Minime vero: quando non nisi ad eius iudicis tribunal stabimus, qui patronus quoque noster est: quique nos in
fidem clientelamque suam suscepit” (OS2:87-88).
believes, is a kind of death.\textsuperscript{101} These additions particularly in the \textit{Catechism} reflect discussions in the 1539 \textit{Institutes}.

The Pauline view that Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and enthronement are directly connected to the spiritual life of a Christian is a doctrinal tradition since the ancient church.\textsuperscript{102} In his \textit{Exposition of the Apostles’ Creed}, Aquinas evidently teaches that Christ opens up the way to heaven through his ascension\textsuperscript{103} so that we might be secured of the possession of the kingdom and that he might intercede for us.\textsuperscript{104} Erasmus tells richly about comforts brought by Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and enthronement.\textsuperscript{105} So do Zwingli\textsuperscript{106} and Bucer.\textsuperscript{107} The issue of the transformation of the earthly body at the last day

\textsuperscript{101} Calvin, \textit{Cathechism}, A. to Q84 “Hanc quaestionem solvit Paulus, cum eos, qui tunc supererunt, subita mutatione innovatum iri tradit: ut abolita carnis corruptione induant incorruptionem”; Q85 “Tu ergo hanc mutationem mortis instar illis fore intelligis: quod primae naturae futura sit abolitio, et alterius novae initium” (OS 2:87). In the \textit{Instruction}, on the other hand, Calvin refers to the same issue in the exposition of “the resurrection of the body” though he at this stage only mentions the transformation on the last day; “Car ceulx qui lors seront trouvez vivans passeront a nouvelle vie plustost par soubdaine immutation que par forme naturelle de mort” (OS 2:402).


\textsuperscript{103} Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum,” 208(947); “[Christ’s ascension is useful (utilis) in three things] Primo quantum ad ductum: nam ad hoc ascendit ut nos duceret. Nos enim nesciebamus viam, sed ipse ostendit.” Athanasius has already stated in \textit{De incarnatione verbi dei} (25) that by clearing the demonic air through the cross Christ opened the new way into heaven. In the 16th century, Erasmus, for instance, maintains in his 1533 \textit{De praeparatione ad mortem} (ADS v-1:354): “Alterum est, hoc etiam efficacius, quod Dominus pro te moriens effecit, vt mors, quae prius erat transitus ad inferos, nunc sit aditus coelestium gaudiorum....”

\textsuperscript{104} Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum,” 208(947).

\textsuperscript{105} Erasmus, \textit{Explanatio symboli} (ASD v-1:263): “(After quoting Col.3:1-2) Exhibitum est hoc spectaculum oculis corporeis, vt animos nostros a terrenis curis ad coelestis vitae desiderium accenderet.... Quod resurrexit, addita est nobis certa fiducia, fore vt in illo die, quem Deus nobis ignotum esse voluit, iisdem corporibus, quae nunc gestamus, reuiuiscamus. Quod ascendit in coelum, evidenti argumento docuit nobis hic non esse quarendam veram felicitatem, sed viendum noc mundo velut in transitu tanquam non vitam omnesque curas ad illam coelestem aeternamque vitam transferendas. Quod autem sedet ad dexteram Patris magnam nobis parit securitatem aduersus omnia terriculamenta mundi, quod tam amicum tamque potentem aducatum habemus in coelis.”

\textsuperscript{106} Zwingli, \textit{In expositionem fidei} (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5, 72).
has also been discussed by, again, Erasmus. On the other hand, Calvin’s view that not only Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and enthronement but also his second coming and final judgment are comfort, is his characteristic understanding in comparison with many other catechisms. Bucer’s one, for example, despite the fact that it was written about the same time and has many similarities as Calvin’s, persuades believers to good works on account of the last judgment. This Calvin’s evangelical view of last things has been displayed in the preface to the French New Testament.

c. The resurrection of the body and the everlasting life

In the Institutes, Calvin discusses in detail about the divine election and the perfection or glorification of the elect under the article of the church “I believe in the holy catholic church” because he regards it as a belief of the invisible church of the elect. Nonetheless, the eschatological point of view is dropped out of the explanations both in the Instruction and the Catechism, possibly because he avoided a duplication of the contents of

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108 Erasmus, Explanatio symboli (ASD v-1:264): “Alii putant eos non morituros, sed tamen ad immortalitatem immutandos. Neutram sententiam reicitur auctoritas ecclesiae, quamquam ea quae sentit tum in carne repertos, non morituros se ad immortalitatem transferendos, magis congruit Pauli verbis 1 Corinthiis 15 et 1 Thessalonicensibus 4. Sed non gaudet contentione religiosa pietas.”

109 Bucer, Der kürzer Catechismus (MBDS, 6/3,187): “Wolan, so gedencke an dis gericht des herren, hüte dich vor sunden und thu gute wreck.”

110 See, discussions above (2.1.). Cf. Luther’s exposition on the same article of the Creed.

111 OS 1:86-91.

112 Calvin, Inst (1536): “Primum credimus sanctam ecclesiam catholicam, hoc est, universum electorum numerum, sive angeli sint, sive homines (OS 1:86).
the articles “the resurrection of the body” and “the life everlasting.” Accordingly, let us also focus just on these two articles.

In comparison with the argument in *Psychopannychia* as we shall see later, the treatment of the doctrine of resurrection in the first *Institutes*, published two years later than the original draft of the former, is surprisingly simple:

We believe the resurrection of the body, that is: It will be that all human bodies will be raised all at once from corruption into incorruption, from mortality into immortality (I Cor.15; I Thess.4; Acts23); and even those who died before will receive their flesh, whether they had been eaten by worms, or perished in the earth, or reduced to ashes, or scattered in some other mode. But those who still survive at that time will also take off the corruption of their flesh. All will, by a sudden change, transcend into an immortal nature: the godly surely into glory of life, the reprobate into condemnation of death (Matt. 25).\footnote{Calvin, *Inst* (1536): “Credimus carnis resurrectionem, hoc est: futurum, ut omnia hominum corruptione in incorruptionem, ex mortalitate in immortalitatem, semel suscitentur (1 Cor.15. I Thess.4. Acts23); atque hi quidem, qui antea vita defuncti fuerint, carnem suam recipiant, sive a vermis suscita corpora fuerit, sive in terra putruerit, sive in cineres redacta, sive alio quovis modo dissipata. Qui vero tunc superstitem reperientur, suae etiam carnis corruptionem exuant, omnes subita immutatione in naturam immortatem transeant, pui quidem in gloriam vitae, reprobio in mortis damnationem (Matt.25)” (OS 1:93).}

A couple of things are noticeable. First, the whole structure of the discussion seems like other confessional writings.\footnote{Cf. with *The Augsburg Confession*, Art.17 and Hübmaier’s catechism.} Secondly, the text mostly goes along with the Pauline description of the resurrection especially in I Cor. 15:52 and 53, though the last sentence (“the godly...”) is probably based on John 5:29 rather than Matt. 25:31-46. Finally, although the text is basically a composition of biblical accounts, it has a sentence which comes not from Scripture but from the patristic source. The notion (“whether they had been eaten by worms...”) reminds us of an ancient controversial issue, that is, the integrity
of the resurrected body.\footnote{See, for example, Tertullian, \textit{De resurrectione carnis}, 57; Augustine, \textit{Enchiridion}, 88-89; and \textit{De civitate Dei}, 22.12, 20.} It will be evident from the discussion in \textit{Psychopannychia} that Calvin had certain, if not deep, knowledge not only of the Scriptures but of the ancient Fathers’ writings as well. While we cannot speculate about how much theology and in what depth Calvin knew at this early stage, it seems writing a catechetical treatise was another matter for Calvin who had sensitivity to literary genre.\footnote{Calvin mentions the relationship between Christ’s resurrection and ours also in the context of the Lord’s supper (OS 1:138-141). However, he does not develop the discussion further in that direction.}

On the article of the everlasting life, then, Calvin considers it as the unceasing blessing where children of God will enter with their glorified bodies and souls. The blessing, which is nothing but the kingdom of God surpassing human thoughts, is secured through the union with the Lord who is the source of it. Calvin, at the same time, refers to the eternal death, darkness, punishment for the forsaken.\footnote{OS 1:93.}

In the \textit{Instruction}, Calvin treats these two articles together,\footnote{Calvin elsewhere puts “the communion of saints, and forgiveness of sins, and eternal life” together. See, \textit{Inst.} (1536), OS 1:93. Cf. also with Luther’s \textit{Der Kleine Katechismus (Unser Glaube}, 545[504]), where he adds “the forgiveness of sins” to the other two.} by way of stating that both the good and the evil will be raised for the judgment though their states will be separated from each other, and the state of the believers is “the everlasting life.” The exposition itself is almost overlapped with that of the \textit{Institutes}.\footnote{OS 1:402-403.} The only additional comment to the latter is that, as chapter 13\textsuperscript{th} of the first Corinthians tells, the believers will
see face to face the glory of the Lord on the day even though their future bliss is presently obscure. 120

The *Catechism* also deals the two articles together though there are two differences from the *Instruction*. First, the former adds a question and an answer about the benefit to confess the articles. 121 It seems that Calvin moves what many other catechisms usually discuss about under the articles of Christ’s resurrection et cetera, that is, the significance of aiming at the heavenly happiness rather than the earthly, more properly to under this article. Another difference is a change in the explanation of “the everlasting life.” In contrast with the *Institutes* and the *Instruction* in which not only the believer’s bliss but also the unbeliever’s destiny is equally described, the *Catechism* considers only the believers’ happiness and explains why the Creed does not refer to the other. 122

As far as the wholeness of the resurrected body, which Calvin inserted in the exposition (quoted above), is concerned, it is one of the traditional doctrines since Tertullian and Augustine. 123 Aquinas also describes the identity and the wholeness of the

120 OS 1:402.

121 Calvin, *Catechism*, Q107 “Quorum hoc caput in fidei confessione ponitur? --- Ut admoneamur, non esse sitam in terranostram foelicitatem. Cuius cognitionis duplex est utilitas ac usus...” (OS 2:91). Calvin also refers to “utilitas” in such questions of 29, 40, 72 etc. Cf. “fructus” in Q77. Asking ‘uses’ of the doctrines is undoubtly a Western theological tradition. See, for example, Thomas’ descriptions in n.101 and 123.


123 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 57; Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 88-89; and *De civitate Dei*, xxii:12 and especially xxii:20 (PL41:782): "Absit autem ut ad resuscitanda corpora vitaque reddenda non possit omnipotentia Creatoris omnia revocare, quae vel bestiae, vel ignis absumpsit, vel in pulverem cineremve collapsum, vel in humorem solutum, vel in auras est exhalatum. Absit ut sinus ullus secretumque naturae ita recipient aliquid subtractum sensibus nostris, ut omnium Creatoris aut lateat cognitionem, aut
resurrected body, and the simultaneous resurrection of the good and the evil though their conditions will differ. As for the benefit of believing the resurrection, both Aquinas and Bucer clearly teach it. Further, in terms of “the everlasting life,” it is a spiritual and theological tradition that the bliss of the believers in the world to come is the direct vision of God (visio dei) or the union with God (unio dei, unio mystica). Of the perfect joy flown from the union and the unbelievers’ eternal death, we can see a traditional account, again, in Aquinas.

Having observed Calvin’s explanations on the articles of last things in the Creed, we may fairly conclude that they essentially never go beyond the traditional views. Although his exposition lacks almost any speculative reflections and remains within biblical descriptions, thus it may be difficult to judge whether or not Calvin succeeded the Western spiritual tradition of visio dei, his reference to the future union and encounter with effugiat potestatem.” Cf. Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum,” 215(1004)-216(1007). See, our later discussion on Calvin’s doctrine of the final resurrection.

124 Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum,” 216(1008-1009). The double resurrection of the righteous and the sinners is based of the biblical texts such as Dan.12:2, Matt.25:46, and John 5:29. However, it seems also a theological axiom formed in the early stage. See, for example, Rufinus’ Commentarius in symbolum apostolorum 45-48.

125 According to Aquinas, the hope and faith of resurrection is beneficial for us in four things: 1. It takes away sorrows for the dead; 2. It also takes away fear for death; 3 & 4 persuade to do good works (“In symbolum apostolorum,” 215(1000-1003).

126 Bucer, Der kürzer Catechismus (MBDS, 6/3), 194-195.

127 Cf. also, Le sommaire de Guillaume Farel: réimprimé d'après l'édition de l'an 1534 & précédé d'une introduction (Google eBook, accessed March 10, 2011), ch.41(De la résurrection).


129 Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum,” 217(1012-1017).
Christ obviously points that direction. On the other hand, in comparison with Luther and Bucer who discuss “the eternal life” in the larger context of sanctification by the Holy Spirit, Calvin seems more concerned with the perfect state in a believer’s salvation history by way of connecting the article to that of resurrection. We should recall here again that the similar description of the believers’ bliss can be found in Calvin’s preface to the French New Testament.

In closing the exposition of the Christian faith according to the Apostles’ Creed in the Institutes, Calvin extensively adds a discussion on two other virtues beside faith, namely, love and hope. This arrangement of discussion, without a doubt, goes back to Augustine’s Enchiridion. We could say, however, that Calvin’s argument is more teleological than Augustine because he refutes, from the perspective of justification by faith alone, the misunderstanding of excessive emphasis on the work of love, and argues that the ultimate goal of the virtues is in God himself even though they are equally necessary.

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130 See, discussions on Psychopannychia. Cf. Zwingli, Articuli sive conclusions LXVII, Art. LIX.

131 Cf. the related questions in Luther’s small and larger catechisms.


133 OS 1:93-96. In Instruction, only “hope” is taken up (OS 1:403). Neither is discussed in the Catechism.

134 See, Augustine, Enchiridion, 2:7-8 and 30:114-32:121. In his Instruction, Calvin especially applies the order of transition from the Apostles’ Creed (fides) to the Lord’s prayer (spes).

135 Calvin, Inst (1536), “Porro cogitandum est, et fidem et spem et caritatem Spiritus sancti dona esse, nec posse ullam ex ipsis aut inchoari, aut consistere, nisi Dei misericordia (1 Cor. 4). Itaque et omnes a Deo petere, non in nobis quaerere discamus…. Sic enim nobis opus est, ut perpetuo augeantur, dum in hac vita sumus, quae, dum optime nobiscum agitur, non aliud est, quam via et professus, donec ad Deum plane pertingamus, in quo tota nostra perfectio sita est” (OS 1:95-96).
2.3.3. The Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer

For Calvin, “the kingdom of God” means the spiritual reign by God for his people. As rebels against God are defeated by the word of God, the kingdom of God proceeds on the earth. The second petition “Thy kingdom come,” therefore, prays first of all that believers be added day by day and the Lord’s grace work in them, so that the Satan’s kingdom be destroyed little by little; secondly, that the kingdom of Satan be completely defeated through the accomplishment of the kingdom of God and the appearance of the divine judgment. These points are virtually repeated both in the Instruction and the Catechism although the latter clearly indicates that this petition is related both to the present day and to the last.

While Origen teaches the spiritual understanding of “the kingdom,” Augustine argues it in terms of historical realities and shows its present-future aspect clearly.

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137 Calvin, Instruction (OS 1:407).

138 Calvin, Catechism, Q268-270 (OS 2:121-122). Calvin argues of the proclamation of the Gospel as a key to open the gates to the Kingdom of God in the discussion of the Penance in the Institutes (OS 1:185). Accordingly, “evangelii verbum..., ipsissimam esse Dei sententiam, apud summum Dei tribunal promulgatum, in libro vitae scriptam, in coelo ratam, fixam et firmam” (OS 1:186). Cf. also, Catechism, Q300.

139 Calvin, Catechism, Q270 “Nonne quotidie fiunt haec omnia? ---Fiunt eo modo, ut inchoatum dici possit regnum Dei. Optamus ergo, ut assidue crescat ac provehatur: donec ad summum fastigium pervenerit. Quod ultimo demum die futurum speramus: quo Deus solus, omnibus creaturis in ordinem coactis, exaltabitur et eminebit: adeoque erit omnia in omnibus” (OS 2:121-122). Cf. with the 1539 Institutes. Regarding the present-future aspect of the Kingdom of God, Calvin already mentioned with explaining the civil government in the first Institutes: “Nam illud quidem initia coelestis regni quaedam iam nunc super terram in nobis inchoat, et in hac mortalit evanidae vita immortalem et incorruptibilem beatitudinem quodammodo auspiciatur” (OS 1:259).

140 Origen, Περὶ οὐχὶς (De oratione), 25:1-3. To a question why we pray “Kingdom come” for it is already there, Origen replies with two reasons: 1. for the perfection of our incomplete God’s knowledge; 2.
Aquinas regards the kingdom as the reign of God, and states that this petition asks for perish of death and evil through our obedience to God’s will and the establishment of God’s reign in us.\textsuperscript{142} Moreover, Erasmus relates the petition to the proclamation of the Gospel and its accomplishment.\textsuperscript{143} However much Calvin were influenced by these predecessors, it seems that, as some scholars have already pointed out,\textsuperscript{144} he directly owes his understanding to his contemporary reformers, Luther and Bucer in particular.

According to Luther, the kingdom is the reign of Christ and of the Holy Spirit by his words; the coming of the kingdom appears in two ways both present and eternal; and we should pray that the divine word be proclaimed, we ourselves obey it, many others be also guided by the Holy Spirit and remain in the rule, so that the kingdom of devil be eventually crashed.\textsuperscript{145} Bucer also states in his commentary on the Gospels\textsuperscript{146} that the kingdom is the

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\textsuperscript{141} Cf. Augustine, \textit{Enchiridion}, 30(115): “et hic(blessing) inchoata quantumcumque proficimus augentur in nobis, perfecta vero, quod in alia vita sperandum est, semper possidebuntur” (PL40:286) and \textit{De Sermone Domini in monte}, II.6(20): “Non enim et hic ita dictum est, \textit{Adveniat regnum tuum}, quasi nunc Deus non regnet. Sed forte quis dicat, \textit{Adveniat} dictum esse in terram. Quasi vero non etiam ipse nunc regnet in terra, semperque in ea regnaverit a constitutio mundi. \textit{Adveniat} ergo accipietur est: manifestetur hominibus” (PL34:1278); II.10(36): “Nam cum vita nostra temporaliter nunc agatur, atque speretur aeterna, et cum aeterna priora sint dignitate, quamvis temporalibus prius actis ad illa transeatur; trium primarum petitionum impetraiones quanquam in hac vita, quae isto saeculo agitur, exordium capiant…, tamen omnia tria in aeternum manebunt” (PL34:1285)

\textsuperscript{142} Aquinas, \textit{In orationem Dominicum}, 225-227 (No. 1051-1059).


\textsuperscript{145} See, the said question in Luther’s \textit{Der Große Katechismus (Unser Glaube}, 707-710).
reign by the Spirit over his people; that the kingdom proceeds when misery sinners praise and enjoy God so that his glory be adored; that we are called by the Gospel through which we are liberated from sin and transferred under Christ’s government, and received into the kingdom through faith and love; and that the kingdom of the Father finally comes to its completion among us in order that God become all in all.

On the other hand, however, Bucer is different from Calvin in treating the second petition as a pair of the first (“Hollowed be thy name”), emphasizing its relation to the Old Testament, and mentioning little the crash of the kingdom of Satan. Judging from these differences, as far as the second petition is concerned, it seems to me that the similarity between Bucer’s view and Calvin’s is not as evident as having been insisted. In basic points, at least, the latter’s view rather appears closer to Luther’s.

In any case, we found again that Calvin learned many things from the contemporary reformers as well as the theological tradition in the past. It is especially important for our study that he recognizes the double aspects, both present and future, of the second petition just as the case of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue as we have seen above.

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146 Enarrationes perpetuae in Evangelia (1530), whose part of ‘Lord’s prayer’ is translated into English by Battles. See, Institutes (1536), tr. Battles, 343-362. Since I could not check its Latin text, I will use this translation for convenience.

realize here again that Calvin, and other reformers as well, owed this basic viewpoint in eschatology to the bishop of Hippo.  

2.3.4. The Lord’s Supper

Since the topic of the Lord’s Supper is one of the longest and most controversial expositions in the 1536 Institutes, we will limit ourselves to consider only some related points to our study.

According to Calvin, this sacrament designates the unity of Christ and the believers through which the eternal life is theirs, and the heaven is inseparable from them. Then, Calvin refers once again to that “exchange” of Christ and us. In other words, Christ’s mortality was for our immortality; Christ’s descent for our ascension.

Thus, this sacrament is but a sign of promise that Christ nurtures us by his flesh and blood unto the eternal life. Although the reign of the ascended Christ extends to the whole creation, so to a place at the sacrament, we should not worship the sacramental elements here on earth because the resurrected Christ with his body is now in heaven. We rather

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148 For a comparative study of Calvin’s and Augustine’s eschatology, see, for example, Stanley H. Russell, “A Study in Augustine and Calvin of the Church Regarded as the Number of the Elect and as the Body of the Baptized” (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford, 1958), chs.7, 10, and 11.

149 The longest discussion, however, is that of Penance.

150 OS 1:137.

151 OS 1:137. See, also, OS 1:138.

152 OS 1:138.

153 OS 1:142.
raise our hearts up high and worship the Lord there in heaven.\textsuperscript{154} Until the kingdom is completed and God fully reveals himself, Christ is the ultimate treasure of all knowledge and wisdom for us. Hence, the present age is properly called “the last hour, the last days, and the last times” in the Scriptures.\textsuperscript{155}

What both the \textit{Instruction} and the \textit{Catechism} teach in common is that the Lord’s Supper is a sacrament that does not only bring the assurance of the eternal life to our soul, but also assure us immortality or the resurrection of body.\textsuperscript{156} Like the \textit{Institutes}, the \textit{Catechism} urges not to seek Christ in the earthly things but to raise heart up to the heaven, and encourages us to anticipate eagerly Christ’s return.\textsuperscript{157} These young Calvin’s views of the Lord’s Supper can also be clearly found in a treatise in 1537, namely \textit{Confession of Faith concerning the Eucharist},\textsuperscript{158} and \textit{The Form of prayers and ecclesiastical chants} or the \textit{Genevan Liturgy} in 1542.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{154} OS 1:143-144.

\textsuperscript{155} OS 1:160. The same discourse is repeated in the discussion of the ecclesiastical power (OS 1:236).

\textsuperscript{156} Calvin, \textit{Instruction} (OS 1:413) and \textit{Catechism}, Q340 (OS 2:137), 344 (OS 2:138), and 356 (OS 2:141).

\textsuperscript{157} Calvin, \textit{Catechism}, A. to Q355, “Quin potius ita sentio, veritate potiamur signorum, erigendas esse in coelum mentes, ubi Christus est, et unde eum exspectamus iudicem et redemptorem” (OS 2:140-141).

\textsuperscript{158} Calvin, \textit{Confessio fidei de eucharistia}, “Vitam spiritualem quam nobis Christus largitur, non in eo duntaxat sitam esse confitenum, quod spiritu suo nos vivificat, sed quod spiritus etiam sui virtute carnis suae vivificae nos facit particeps, qua participatione in vitam aeternam pascamur…. Ergo spiritum eius vinculum esse nostrae cum ipso participationis agnoscinus, sed ita ut nos ille carnis et sanguinis Domini substantia vere ad immortalitatem pescat, et eorum participatione vivificet” (CO9:711-712). He presents himself to us as we are by faith exalted to heaven with him.

\textsuperscript{159} Calvin, \textit{La forme des prières et chantz ecclésiastiques}... (OS 2:1-58, esp.39-50). The expression “lift up our spirits and hearts” (OS 2:48) is, of course, a traditional “\textit{sursum corda}” in the Christian liturgy.
Despite the sheer theological disputes on the Lord’s Supper between the Catholics and the Protestants, and among the Protestants themselves, Calvin’s teaching on the doctrine has many similarities, especially in their eschatological terms, with those of other theologians. Concerning the view that the Supper is nurture for the eternal life, Kolde, Luther, Zwingli, and Bucer mention it, with diverse nuances though. That view of the Supper as nurture for the eternal life, and as an assurance for the resurrection has its root in the scriptural verses and ecclesial liturgies. Another view that Christ should be adored not in the elements of the sacrament but at the right hand of the heavenly Father is also taught in such theologians as Hubmaier and Zwingli.

160 For one of the most recent studies on Calvin’s early doctrine of the Lord’s Supper, particularly its similarity to that of Melanchthon, see Richard A. Muller, “From Zürich or from Wittenberg?: An Examination of Calvin’s Early Eucharistic Thought” in Calvin Theological Journal 45/2 (2010): 243-255.

161 Kolde, Der Christenspiegel, 54: “…yn welcher [the sacrament’s] krafft ynd macht wir sullen wandelen den verren wech tzo dem ewigen leuene ind also verre dat wyr den ewigen got seyn den die engel seynt in syon, dat ys in den hemelen.”

162 Luther, Der Große Katechismus (Unser Glaube, 748): “Darum heißt es mit Recht eine Speise der Seele, die den neuen Menschen nährt und stärkt…. Denn das neue Leben soll so beschaffen sein…."

163 Zwingli, In expositionem fidei (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5, 149-150): “Verum cum coenam domini cum hac spirituali manducatione venis et domino gratias agis pro tanto beneficio, pro animi tu liberacione, qua liberatus es a desperationis pernicie, et pro pignore, quocertus es de eternal beatitudine, ac simul cum fratibus panem et vinum, que iam symbolicum Christi corpus sunt, participas, iam proprie sacramentaliter edis…. “(ibid., 160): “Gustus olfactusque et ipsi huc advocantur, ut odorant, quam suavis sit dominus quamque beatus sit qui illo fidelit. Ut enim illi cibo gaudent et expergefiunt, sic mens hunc coelestis spei suavem nacta gustum gestit et exultat.”


166 For instance, a prayer chanted after participation to the Supper in such liturgies as the Roman Mass. See, Geoffrey Wainwright, Eucharist and Eschatology (London: Epworth Press, 1969), 111.

2.4. Conclusion

Having compared Calvin’s teachings on the last things in the 1536 *Institutes* with his own catechisms, and with catechetical writings of his predecessors and contemporaries, let us now itemize what we have considered as characteristics of early Calvin’s eschatology.

1. Evangelical and historical: Calvin’s views of the Gospel and of the salvation history as appeared in the preface to the French New Testament, give a foundation to his teachings in the first *Institutes*. Like Luther, there develops an evangelical eschatology liberated from the fear of the medieval eschatology through the Gospel of Christ.

2. Traditional: As we could already assume at the beginning from the fact that the eschatology itself was not a controversial topic in the Reformation except the doctrine of purgatory, Calvin’s teachings are basically traditional and owe much to the theological and spiritual heritage in the past. It is not the case, however, that Calvin always depends on a specific source or a theologian.

3. Biblical: Calvin never accepts traditions without criticism. Probably because catechetical writings are primarily designed for the beginners, he seems to avoid arguments but apply only traditional teachings supported apparently and positively by scriptural evidences.

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168 In both *In expositionem fidei* (CR93, Zwingli Werk VI/5, 140-147) and *Ein Klare Underrichtung vom Nachtmal Christi* (CR91, Zwingli Werk IV:827-841), Zwingli deals the issue in detail.
4. Teleological: If there is any outstanding characteristic in young Calvin’s eschatology, it would be its teleological tendency.\textsuperscript{169} This is not exactly the same thing as “the future-orientated” as often said.\textsuperscript{170} It is rather “the consummation-orientated.” It is recognition that there is a God-given end or purpose for this created world, history, and human beings, all of which are heading toward their consummation in God. This tendency must appear in various ways of expression as “the upward” or “the future” orientated.

5. Augustinian: As far as such a teleological view of history and an understanding of the two-sided (present-future) eschatology, at least their very basic ideas, are concerned, it seems that Calvin and his contemporary Reformers are undoubtedly Augustinian not only in terms of soteriology but of eschatology as well for both are closely related.\textsuperscript{171}


\textsuperscript{171} Cf. also, Calvin, \textit{Catechismus} (1538), 1 “Haec igitur praecipua vitae nostrae cura et sollicitudo sit oportet, Deum quaerere et ad eum omni animi studio adspirare, nec alibi nisi in ipso acquiescere” (CO5:323) with Augustine’s \textit{Confessionum}, 1:1(1), “…quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te…” (PL32:661).
CHAPTER 3

ESCHATOLOGY AS A THEOLOGICAL MOTIF: THE 1539 INSTITUTES

3.1. The 1539 Institutes: A Methodological Change

3.1.1. The Institutes as a textbook

The second edition of Calvin’s Institutes was published in 1539 under his pseudonym “Alcuinus” while Calvin was banished from Geneva and stayed in Strasbourg. Even though the first edition of the Institutes was written in Latin, it was not necessarily intended as a scholarly work but as a book of piety by which religious people, many of whom had been suffering under “the pastoral cruelty of the medieval church,” might be shaped in true godliness. This book of piety, however, was now fully revised only three years after the first edition and developed into seventeen chapters. In comparison with changes occurred in the following editions of the Institutes up to the final Latin edition in

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3 See, Epistola ad Franciscum I in Inst (1536): “formarentur ad veram pietatem qui aliquo religionis studio tanguntur” (OS 1:21). Cf. the purpose of Erasmus’ Enchiridion: “…ut tibi compendiariam quamdam vivendi rationem præscriberem, qua instructus, posses ad mentem Christo dignam pervenire” (LB V1-2).
1559, the development from the first edition to the second was quite significant. It seemed like a completely new work though it contains many materials of the first Institutes. Let us briefly look at some new features of it.

First, its title. Compared with the long title of the first edition, the second one is surprisingly short but meaningful. It reads “Institutes of the Christian Religion, now at last truly corresponding to its title.” This title shows a change in the treatise’s character. At the time of 1538, Calvin still used the Latin word “institutio” in a generic sense like instruction or catechism. In the 1539 Institutes, however, the term has a specific meaning as Calvin himself explains in the preface to the new Institutes. The new treatise is no longer a mere book of piety but a textbook “to prepare and instruct candidates of sacred theology for the reading of the divine word.” For this educational purpose, Calvin

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4 What happened personally to Calvin between 1536 and 1539 may be best explained by T. H. L. Parker as follows: “His [Calvin’s] lecturing on Romans, St. John, and 1 Corinthians and his expository preaching, his close association with Bucer, a man of wide learning and mental penetration, his own further reading in theology and Church history, have all contributed to clarify and enlarge his thinking” (Parker, Biography, 74). See also, idem, “Calvin the Exegete: Change and Development,” in Calvinus Ecclesiae Doctor, ed. W. H. Neuser (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1980), 34. Calvin’s reading in philosophy, especially Plato, may be added to this list. See, Wendel, Calvin, 115.

5 Christianae religionis institutio, totam fere pietatis summam, et quidquid est in doctrina salutis cognitu necessarium, complectens, omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus ac recens editum.

6 Institutio Christianae religionis, nunc vere demum suo titulo respondens.


8 “Ioannes Calvinus lectori” (CO 1:255-256), dated August 1, 1539.

9 “sacrae theologiae candidatos ad divini verbi, lectionem ita praeparare et instruere” (CO 1:255-256).
strategically arranged all the materials as clearly as possible.\textsuperscript{10} These may explain the change of his terminology of “institutio” between 1538 and 1539.\textsuperscript{11}

Moreover, the treatise was intended as a companion or a necessary tool (\textit{necessario instrumento}) to Calvin’s forthcoming commentaries on the Scriptures. Calvin, thus, could maintain that “[in the commentaries] I shall have no need to carry out long disputationes of doctrine, or wonder forth in the common topics.”\textsuperscript{12} In other words, the new \textit{Institutes} was designed not as a simple catechism but “long discussions of doctrine” or “common places” which would provide a theological framework and foundation for his biblical commentaries. And it was \textit{Commentary on Romans} that became a first “\textit{specimen}” of this relationship between his \textit{Institutes} and biblical commentaries.\textsuperscript{13} In fact, we can find a similar discussion of method also in the dedicatory epistle of the \textit{Commentary}.\textsuperscript{14} Calvin obviously had a

\textsuperscript{10} “Siquidem religionis summam omnibus partibus sic mihi complexus esse videor, et eo quoque ordine digessisse, ut si quis eam recte teneurit ei non sit difficile statuere, et quid potissimum quaerere in scriptura, et quem in scopum quidquid in ea continetur referre debeat” (CO 1:255-256). It was an important element in a humanist’s rhetoric not only to collect teachings from the Scriptures and theologians, but also to organize and present them as simply and clearly as possible. See, Erasmus, \textit{A Letter to Paul Volz}, in \textit{Opus epistolorum Des. Erasmi Roterodami} (ed. P.S. Allen), III (No.858, 1518):365, line 139-143, “commodissimum itaque mea sententia fuerit si muneriis hoc viris aliquot iuxta piis ac doctis deletur, vt ex purissimis fontibus Evangelistarum et Apostolorum, ex probatissimis interpretibus vniuersam Christi philosophiam in compendium contrahant, ita simpliciter vt tamen erudite, ita breuiter vt tamen dilucide.” Cf. Manfred Hoffman, \textit{Rhetoric and Theology: The Hermeneutic of Erasmus} (University of Toronto Press, 1994), 151-156.

\textsuperscript{11} Cf. Muller, \textit{Unaccommodated Calvin}, 104f.


\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Commentarii in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos}. It was published in March, 1540, with an epistle of dedication dated on October 18, 1539. We will use Parker’s critical edition of \textit{Commentarius in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos}, now in \textit{Ioannis Calvini Opera Exegetica} (hereafter COE), vol. XIII (Droz, 1999). Numbers in parenthesis indicate pagination and lines of this edition.

\textsuperscript{14} Calvin, \textit{Comm.Rom} (COE 13: 3-6).
sense of the different tasks and literary styles between the *Institutes* and the *Commentary*, and probably worked on both simultaneously. Therefore, as far as the 1539 *Institutes* is concerned at least, it is necessary to consider these two treatises together, as Calvin did.

3.1.2. Relationship between the Institutes and Melanchthon’s *Loci communes*

Now, once we understand the revised *Institutes* as a textbook of theology and its close relation to the *Commentary on Romans*, we might be reminded of the relationship between Melanchthon’s *Loci communes* and his *Commentary on Romans*. In his dedicatory letter of the 1521 edition of *Loci*, Melanchthon describes the purpose of his *Loci* and its relation to Romans, as follows:

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16 T.H.L. Parker, *Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries*, 2nd edition (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 10. It is also interesting to see that the *Commentary on Romans* itself was revised a couple of times like the *Institutes*, and that there are some cases in which the former even takes the content of the latter into its revised texts. For instance, on 8:23 (1551 ed.), 13:12 (1556 ed.).


Last year [1520], while expounding Pauline epistle written to the Romans, I methodically arranged the varied contents of the epistle under the most common theological topics. Further, as far as it is retained to the summary of the argument, the principal topics of Christian teaching are indicated so that youth may understand: what must be chiefly searched in Scripture, and how disgusting are the hallucinations on theological issues by those who have offered us the subtleties of Aristotle instead of the teachings of Christ.  

Although Melanchthon does not pay so much attention to literary differences between Loci and Commentary as Calvin does, we can unmistakably see the similarity of the Loci and the Institutes in their character. Among many editions of Melanchthon’s Loci communes, which has a more complicated history of development than that of the Institutes, the 1521 and 1535 Latin editions are of special import to our discussion. The topics in the 1521 edition are:

- De hominis viribus adeoque de libero arbitrio
- De peccato
- De lege
- De evangelio
- De gratia
- De gratia
- De caritate et spe

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19 “Anno superiore, Paulinam Epistolam quae Romanis inscripta est, enarraturi, communissimos rerum theologiarum locos, adeoque illius Epistolae farraginem ceu methodica ratione digessimus…. Porro, quod ad argumenti summam attinet, indicantur hic Christianae discipline praecipui loci, ut intelligat iuventus, et quae sint in scripturis potissimum requirenda, et quam foede hallucinati sint ubique in re theologica qui nobis pro Christi doctrina Aristotelicas argutias prosidere” (OM 21:81-82).


21 In his letter to Erasmus, Melanchthon states that his intention of the 1535 Loci was “quareremdam esse firmam doctrinam et vitilem moribus ac pietati” (Opus Epistolare Erasmi, XI:323, line 29-32).

De discrimine Veteris ac Novi Testamenti
De veteri ac novo homine
De peccato mortali et quotidiano
De signis
De baptismo
De poenitentia
De privatis confessionibus
De participatione mensae Domini
De caritate
De magistratibus
De scandalo 23

As the list shows, it already contains the topics which appear also in the 1539 Institutes as new chapters like justification by faith, 24 the difference between the Old and New Testaments, 25 and repentance. 26 Yet, it is more likely that Calvin employed the 1535 Loci as a principal source for his second Institutes because it does include not only those three but other topics of “predestination” and “tribulation or bearing the cross” as well. 27

In sum, Calvin’s 1539 Institutes is a theological textbook for students of the Scriptures newly designed after Melanchthon’s Loci method structured in accordance with loci or topoi of Romans. 28 This change of the character of the Institutes might also shed a

23 OM 21:IX-XII.
24 CO 1:737-802.
25 CO 1:801-830.
26 CO 1:685-736.
28 It is quite evident, in comparison with Lombard’s Sententia for instance, that one of the changes in the history of theological method was to formulate loci according to the structure of the Epistle to the Romans rather than that of the Creed. See, Muller, Unaccommodated Calvin, 108-111 and 127-130.
new light for our discussion. First, Calvin’s eschatology at least at this stage of his career must be considered in terms of inter-relationships between the new *Institutes* and *Commentary on Romans*, and Melanchthon’s *Loci*. Secondly, we must also take a theological framework of the 1539 *Institutes* seriously, as far as it goes, as a hermeneutical basis for Calvin’s upcoming biblical commentaries, especially their eschatological teachings. Before turning to close examination of some new phase of Calvin’s eschatology in the 1539 *Institutes*, let us observe the development, if any, of the subjects which we have considered in the previous chapter.

3.2. The Development of Eschatological Subjects in the 1539 *Institutes*

3.2.1. *The Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue*

The section of the Law, the exposition of the Decalogue in particular, has been much enlarged in the second *Institutes*. With regard to the fourth commandment, two things are noticeable in this new edition. First, Calvin repeatedly calls the Sabbath in the Old Testament “a shadow” and mentions both its relation to and difference from the New Testament view of the Sabbath.\(^\text{29}\) This may be linked with the new chapter “the relationship between the Old and New Testaments” of the 1539 *Institutes*.\(^\text{30}\) Secondly, Calvin more emphasizes the spiritual and eschatological aspect of the Sabbath, and frequently urges to meditate on it.\(^\text{31}\) “The perpetual Sabbath” in the first *Institutes* is now

\(^{29}\) CO 1:403-405.

\(^{30}\) See, chapter 74 in the 1543 *Institutes* (CO 1:405) where Calvin discusses the transition from the Old Testament Sabbath to the New Testament “Lord’s day.”

\(^{31}\) Ex. “Finis praecepti est, ut propriis affectibus et operibus emortui regnum Dei meditemur, atque ad eam meditationem institutis a Domino rationibus exerceamur” (CO 1:401).
clearly described as “the last day [ultimus dies]” while the whole life of a Christian must be a daily Sabbath. These views may also be reflections of another new chapter of the second *Institutes*, namely, “the life of a Christian man.”

3.2.2. The Apostles’ Creed

a. Articles on Christ

Calvin’s exposition of Christological articles in the Creed has been also remarkably expanded by many additions of scriptural materials. On Christ’s resurrection, while Calvin emphasizes its victorious aspect and its benefit for our own resurrection just like the 1537 *Catechism*, he also adds a note on the authenticity of Christ’s death and resurrection in reference with the identity of his crucified body and the resurrected one. In the exposition of Christ’s ascension, Calvin now maintains clearly that the Kingdom of Christ has truly begun since Christ’s ascension through which his spiritual presence became possible. On Christ’s return, Calvin emphatically encourages us to meditate on it for Christ’s present

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32 Ex. “quod scilicet designarit Dominus nunquam absolutum fore sabbathum, donec ventum ad ultimum diem fuerit” and “Videri ergo possit Dominus, per diem septimum, populo suo delineasse futuram sui sabbathi, in ultimo die, perfectionem: quo continenti sabbathi meditatione, ad hanc perfectionem, tota vita, adspiraret” (CO 1:403).

33 In fact, later in his biblical commentary on the Fourth Commandment (*Mosis libri V. cum Ioannis Calvini commentariis: Genesis seorsum; reliqui quatuor in formam harmoniae digesti*. Geneva, 1563), Calvin apparently states that the commandment means “ut tanquam sibi et mundo mortui, penitus se Deo addicerent” and that “diceret legitimum sabbathi usum referri debere ad nostri abnegationem…” (on Exod.20:8, CO 24:577-578).

34 CO 1:531-532.

35 CO 1:532.

36 CO 1:532. In the 1543 edition, a citation from Augustine’s exposition on John is added.
invisible government will be revealed in the end,\textsuperscript{37} and eloquently argues of “a wonderful consolation” in the fact that the judge is our redeemer.\textsuperscript{38}

b. The resurrection of the body (and the everlasting life)\textsuperscript{39}

In regard with the doctrine of resurrection of the body, a couple of significant shifts occurred in the second \textit{Institutes}. A brief statement on the resurrection in the 1536 \textit{Institutes} and the 1537/38 \textit{Instruction} is changed into a fully expanded discussion though it is still located in the exposition of the Creed.\textsuperscript{40} After a brief introduction, the section argues first the difficulty to believe the bodily resurrection of which philosophers could hardly think.\textsuperscript{41} Calvin, thus, directs our eyes to the event of Christ’s resurrection with which our bodies will also be conformed.\textsuperscript{42} Then, he discusses the manner of resurrection largely based upon Paul’s argument in the chapter 15 of \textit{the first Corinthians}.\textsuperscript{43} This discussion is followed by the description of the glorious goal of resurrection and eternal life for the elect on the one hand,\textsuperscript{44} and of the resurrection and destiny of the ungodly on the other.\textsuperscript{45} He

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{37} CO 1:534.
\item \textsuperscript{38} CO 1:535.
\item \textsuperscript{39} Following the 1537 \textit{Catechism or Instruction}, the 1539 \textit{Institutes} deals with the articles of the resurrection of the body and eternal life together.
\item \textsuperscript{40} CO 1:680-685.
\item \textsuperscript{41} CO 1:680.
\item \textsuperscript{42} CO 1:681.
\item \textsuperscript{43} CO 1:681.
\item \textsuperscript{44} CO 1:681-682.
\item \textsuperscript{45} CO 1:682-683.
\end{itemize}
further argues against the chiliastic view of Christ’s reign. Finally, Calvin discusses hope of the eternal salvation and its significance for our faith, and refutes the erroneous idea of meritorious work as a foundation of hope by Peter Lombard.

These arguments seem to follow by and large the basic structure of the discussion in the 1537 *Instruction* though he now took the description on hope, which was an independent discussion in the *Instruction*, into that of resurrection to be one continuous discussion. Thus, Calvin’s emphasis on the eschatological hope of the doctrine became more obvious. It also seems that the arguments largely comprise materials discussed in Calvin’s *Psychopannychia*. The relationship between these two treatises, however, is a difficult question.

In any case, the discussions on the bodily resurrection are already complicated enough and also scattered throughout the 1539 *Institutes*, particularly in its new chapters. Calvin might already feel it difficult to treat the doctrine in terms of the creedal structure.

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46 CO 1:683-684.
47 CO 1:684-685.
48 OS 1:403.
49 Cf. “hic fidem, spei tolerantia suffultam, in aeternitatis contemplatione defixam retinere oportet. Quo mille annos, instar diei unius reputet” (CO 1:684). This part was moved to III.i.42 of the 1559 edition of the *Institutes*.
50 See, our forthcoming chapter.
51 In the chapter of “the relationship between the Old and New Testaments,” for example, the hope for eternal life and resurrection plays a crucial linkage of the both Testaments. And in his discussion of “the life of a Christian,” Calvin even writes that “neminem bene in Christi schola profecisse, nisi qui et mortis, et ultimae resurrectionis diem cum gaudio expectet” (CO 1:1147).
This probably explains why Calvin eventually creates an independent chapter for the final resurrection in the 1559 edition of the *Institutes.*

### 3.2.3. The Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer and the Lord’s Supper

There is no significant change in the exposition of the second petition of the Lord’s Prayer but a few additions from biblical verses (Luke17:21, Matt.13:24, 52, 1 Cor.1:21) which show the presence of the Kingdom within us and the world. Neither has the argument on the Lord’s Supper a vital change in terms of eschatology though the Johannine view of the Supper, that is that Christ is the internal life, seems to be relatively emphasized. These may be related to Calvin’s emphasis on the present aspect of Christ’s government since his ascension, as we saw above.

### 3.2.4. The Doctrine of Purgatory

Besides those subjects mentioned above, Calvin added an extensive discussion to his revised *Institutes* for refutation of the doctrine of purgatory by giving his expositions to adduced passages of the Scriptures, including the Maccabees, to support it. We shall pick this subject up again later when we deal with Calvin’s commentaries on I Corinthians chapter 3.

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52 See, the argument below.

53 CO 1:928.

54 CO 1:1000-1002.

55 CO 1:532.

56 CO 1:731-736.
We now move into closer examination of the new chapters that appeared in the 1539 *Institutes*. The most important chapters to our subject are “the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments” and “the life of a Christian man.”

3.3. The Relationship between the Old and the New Testaments

3.3.1. Historical Background

a. Pre-Reformation

Since the ancient church, especially anti-Gnostic Fathers, the significance of the Old Testament has been an unshakable axiom of the Christian church. As Steinmetz’s notable “ten theses” show, this has been succeeded in sixteenth-century theology and exegesis. Nonetheless, how the Old Testament is related to the New has not always been that simple. For instance, Irenaeus insisted on the coherency of two Testaments in terms of prophecy-fulfillment relation or by way of recapitulation on the one hand; Origen, on the other hand, emphasized the New Testament as the standard for the allegorical interpretation of the Old. Augustine tried to understand the whole Scripture in the matrix of Faith, Love, and Hope. He also considered the Old Testament ceremonies as abolished.

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57 David Steinmetz, “Theology and Exegesis: Ten Theses,” in *Histoire de l’exégèse au XVIe siècle* (Geneva, 1978), 382. Especially, thesis 3 (“The importance of the Old Testament for the church is predicated upon the continuity of the people of God in history, a continuity which persists in spite of discontinuity between Israel and the church”) and 4 (“The Old Testament is the hermeneutical key which unlocks the meaning of the New Testament and apart from which it will be misunderstood”).


60 Cf. Origen, *De principiis* IV:2.

61 Cf. Augustine, *De doctrina christiana libri quatuor* (PL34):I:37(41)-40(44)
while their moral aspects are still in valid. In fact, the Old Testament promises are basically earthy, while they prefigured heavenly and eternal blessings\(^62\) that are revealed in the New Testament\(^63\): the eternal life.\(^64\) Like Augustine, Aquinas maintains that the two Testaments are same in faith and obedience to the one God though they are different in their status of faith.\(^65\) For Aquinas, the Scriptures are fundamentally regarded as laws rather than testaments or promises. According to Preus, not only Aquinas but also Lombard and Bonaventura understood that the laws, both old and new, are unified in a moral law that is spiritually interpreted\(^66\); for Perez, on the other hand, that one unified law is *fides Christi*.\(^67\) Through the middle Ages, we should note, there has been also another


\(^64\) Augustine, *De spiritu et littera*, 22(37) (PL44:223).

\(^65\) Cf. Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II/1, q.107:1 (Respond) “Dicendum est ergo quod secundum primum modum, lex nova non est alia a lege veteri, quia utriusque est unus finis, scilicet ut homines subdantur Deo; est autem unus Deus et novi et veteris testamenti, secundum illud Rom. III, unus Deus est qui iustificat circumcisionem ex fide, et praeputium per fidem” and (obj.to 1)“ergo dicendum quod unitas fidei utriusque testamenti attestatur unitati finis, dictum est enim supra quod objectum theologiarum virtutum, inter quas est fides, est finis ultimus. Sed tamen fides habuit alium statum in veteri et in nova lege, nam quod illi credebant futurum, nos credimus factum.”


\(^67\) Preus, *From Shadow to Promise*, 120f. Cf. Melanchthon’s criticism on the scholastic understanding of the Old Testament as a law in his *Loci*(1521), especially on the topic of the difference between the Old and New (OM21:192).
view of the relation between the two Testaments, namely, the apocalyptic view of history represented by Joachim of Fiore. 68

b. Reformation

Reformation has taken place with the transition of the biblical hermeneutic. 69 It may be generally true to say that Reformers rejected the arbitrary interpretation of the Scriptures represented by the so-called four-fold senses, and adopted the literal/historical interpretation. 70 Just as the relationship of two Testaments, however, things are more complicated on the level of theological understanding of the whole Scripture, as well as exegesis on the concrete texts.

In his Dictata super Psalterium, young Luther considered both historical and tropological senses more important than others in the biblical interpretation 71 not because

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70 The traditional terminology of the “four senses” no longer had a place especially in Calvin. See, Parker, Calvin’s Old Testament Commentaries, p.70.

71 Ex. Praefatio (glossa) “In Scripturis itaque nulla videlicet allegoria, tropologia, anagoge, nisi alibi hystorice idem expresse dicatur” (WA 3:11); Ps 30[31] (scholae) “Ab hoc versu per 12 sequentes tropologice pulchra est oratio trepidantis conscientiae et peccasse se agnoscentis…. Immo pro tropologia hec regula est. Quod ubi cunque Christus in psalmis conqueritur et orat in affictione corporali ad literam, sub eisdem verbis queritur et otat omnis fidelis anima in Christo genita et erudita et in peccatum se tentatam vel lapsam
his concern is only with present applications of the texts but because, for Luther, “to grasp
the gospel by faith is to hold the future in the present.” Moreover, probably under
influence of Augustine’s *Spirit and Letter*, Luther was also led to believe the divine
promises over the New and Old Testaments and thus a new understanding of
“testamentum.” That considers the Old-New Testament relation as a history of promise
and faith based on the proto-evangelion.

In Zurich, the issue of the relationship between the two Testaments developed in
another way. For the necessity of refuting the Anabaptists, the emphasis was shifted from
Luther’s promise-faith unification for the both Testaments to more formal or “covenantal”
consistency through them. Zwingli, in his *Refutation*, rejected an understanding of two
“testaments” of salvation though he was not without recognizing the differences. On the
contrary, he defended the analogy between the circumcision / the Passover in the Old

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73 See, our discussion on his preface to the New Testament in chapter 2. See, also, Heinrich
for Luther’s more nuanced understanding of the double meaning of the “testamentum” and its relation to his
view of law and gospel.

74 The same is discussed in Melanchthon’s 1521 *Loci*, especially in the topic “De evangeliio” and
“De discrimine Veteris ac Novi Testamenti Item de abrogatione legis”

75 For a brief introduction of the Anabaptists’ view, that of Pilgram Marpeck in particular, of the
relationship between the two Testaments, see, David C. Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings* (Philadelphia:

76 See, several citations from *Refutation*, in Peter A. Lillback, *The Binding of God: Calvin’s Role in
Testament and the baptism / the Lord’s Supper in the New because the sacraments are signs of the "one covenant” with God.\textsuperscript{77} It is another reformer of Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger, who further systematized the arguments of his predecessor in a far more thorough fashion.\textsuperscript{78} In his little treatise \textit{De testamento seu foedere Dei unico & aeterno} (1534), Bullinger consistently re-interpreted the both Testaments from a sole point of view of “one eternal covenant”\textsuperscript{79} and put them into the covenantal structure.

3.3.2. \textit{The Relationship between the Old and the New Testaments in Calvin}

In formulation of a chapter for “the relationship between the Old and New Testaments,” which was eventually divided into two in the final edition,\textsuperscript{80} Calvin has almost certainly followed Melanchthon’s \textit{Loci} in selecting the topic. Even so, his way of treatment with the topic is significantly different from the latter. While Melanchthon more emphasizes on differences between the two Testaments,\textsuperscript{81} Calvin rather intensifies the

\begin{footnotesize}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{78} On the similarity and difference between Zwingli and Bullinger in their discussions of the covenant, see a chart in Lillback, \textit{The Binding of God}, 113.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{79} Beside that treatise, another significant work of Bullinger published prior to Calvin’s 1539 \textit{Institutes} is \textit{Der alt gloub} (1537). In fact, it looks similar as Calvin’s view of the salvation history at certain points. It is, however, a question again how much Calvin could have read this German treatise. We can also find many similarities in Bullinger’s masterpiece \textit{Decades}, yet these sermons began to come out in 1549. We could even guess Calvin’s influence upon it. For Bullinger’s view of the salvation history, see, Steinmetz, \textit{Reformers in the Wings}, 133-142, and Aurelio A. Garcia Archilla, \textit{The Theology of History and Apologetic Historiography in Heinrich Bullinger: Truth in History} (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), especially chs.1 and 2.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{80} \textit{Inst} (1559). II:ix-x.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{81} The title of the topic in \textit{Loci} reads “De discriminare Veteris et Novi Testamenti.”}
\end{footnotesize}
similarity or consistency of them. It is because, as Calvin himself asserts, he felt it necessary to defend the teaching against the Anabaptists who tended to separate the two Testaments and despised the Israelites.\textsuperscript{82}

Different from Zurich reformers, however, it is not the whole story of the raison d’être of the chapter for Calvin. According to the introductory sentences of the discussion in the 1539 \textit{Institutes}, slightly different from those of the final edition, the chapter was designed primarily for providing illustrations to establish the teaching which Calvin has discussed in the previous chapters,\textsuperscript{83} illustrations of the (Old Testament) people who were chosen by God from the beginning of the world into his people covenanted through the same doctrinal condition.\textsuperscript{84} In other words, it illustrates the ultimate purpose of human beings, that is, to live through the earthly life meditating upon the divine worship and the future life.\textsuperscript{85} Hence, the chapter effectively fits in and plays a part of Calvin’s whole enterprise of the revised \textit{Institutes}.

\textsuperscript{82} “necessarium nobis fecerunt furiosi nonnulli ex Anabaptistarum secta: qui non aliter de Israelitico populo sentiunt, quam de aliquo pororum grege, utpote quem nugantur a Domino in hoc terrâ saginatum, citra spem ullam coelestis immortalitätatis” (CO 1:802). Editors of OS (3:403, n.1) refer to Karlstadt’s work: \textit{Von dem Newen und Alten Testament} (1525). We will deal with the relation of Calvin and Anabaptists more in discussion of Psychopannichia.

\textsuperscript{83} They may be chapters of “knowledge of God” (ch.1), “knowledge of man” (ch.2), and “justification by faith” (ch.6) of the 1539 \textit{Institutes}.

\textsuperscript{84} “SUMMAM doctrinae, qua ex vera Dei nostrique notitia, in salutis communionem pervenimus, supra, ut potui exequitus sum. Nunc, quod ad stabilirem eius fidem non parum interest, vice appendicis subnectam: Quoscunque homines ab initio mundi deus in populi sui sortem cooptavit, eos hac lege, atque huius doctrinae vinculo fuisse illi foederatos” (CO 1:801, OS 3:403, n.b).

\textsuperscript{85} “ut primo loco, quem in finem creatus sit, et donis non contemnendis praeditus, reputet: qua cogitatione ad divini cultus, vitaeque futurae meditationem excitetur” (CO 1:307). Cf. \textit{Geneva Catechism} Q1 and \textit{Instruction} ch. 1 in the previous chapter of our discussion.
Once we understand this original intention, it is no wonder why the reference to the immortal or eternal life constantly appears through the chapter, and hope is the central feature for the consistency of the both Testaments. Calvin thus argues, with Paul the Apostle, for the eschatological nature not only of the New Testament but of the Old Testament as well. With a question “since they [the Old Testament people] acknowledged there was far better life for them besides this earth, weren’t they taught to despise the earthly life in order to meditate it?” Calvin starts depicting a series of those believers virtually following the chapter 11 of the Book of Hebrews. Referring to later prophets like Ezekiel and Daniel, Calvin even more strengthens the eschatological nature of the whole book of the Old Testament. It is also noteworthy that Calvin insists that despite many tribulations their lives were hopeful and meditative for the future, and that he seems to consider himself and his contemporary believers also as “sojourners” on earth. It is this

86 It appears in almost every one of the first ten sections of the chapter.


88 “dispiciamus an non ipsi quoque fideles sic instituti fuerint a Domino, ut meliorem alibi vitam sibi esse sentirent, ac neglecta terrena, illam meditarentur” (CO 1:808).


90 CO 1: 816-817.


pattern from earthly tribulations or the “cross” to meditation on the future life that guides the reader another important chapter of this *Institutes*, namely, a chapter on the Christian life.

In short, Calvin does not deal with every issue in regard with the relationship between the Two Testaments in the present chapter. He rather argues for their unity in order to show the goal to which the Jews (and all God’s people) have aspired, that is, the hope of immortality. Possibly influenced both by a Lutheran schema of law-gospel or promise-faith and by a Zurich one of the covenant, yet neither of which is strictly identified with Calvin’s method, he pursued the third way as it were. It is a salvation

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93 CO 1:803. In the discussion of the differences between the Testaments, Calvin even more emphatically considers the future hope as a characteristic of God’s people (CO 1:818). Cf. also Calvin’s discussion in the 1539 *Institutes* on election where he regards the immortality of the heavenly Kingdom through Christ as its end (ch.8/CO 1:880), and on infant baptism whose promises, given also to the Old Testament people through circumcision, are spiritual and referred to eternal life (ch.11/CO 1:975).

94 According to Hendrix, in his first lectures on the Psalms (*Dictata*) Luther’s idea of the “faithful synagogue” and its future-oriented faith gives an eschatological aspect to the traditional ecclesiology, though it is not beyond the spirit-letter schema. Scott H. Hendrix, *Ecclesia in Via: Ecclesiological Developments in the Medieval Psalms Exegesis and the Dictata Super Psalterium* (1513-1515) of Martin Luther (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974): 271-283.

95 Although Calvin takes it for granted that “Patrum omnium foedus adeo substantia et re ipsa nihil a nostro differt, ut unum prorsus atque idem sit: administratio tamen variat”(CO 1:802), it was simply not a topic for his present argument. He deals with it more extensively in the context of the teachings of justification of faith (CO 1:737-801) and of baptism (CO 1:957-990) in the 1539 *Institutes* though he still appreciates the spiritual character of the covenantal promise, that is, the promise of the eternal life (CO 1:975-976).

history of the one, not two, people of God aiming at the eternal life through the Gospel of
Christ, because the Gospel itself has an eschatological impetus. This understanding of the
Scriptures might be called broadly Augustinian. On the other hand, Calvin seems to insist
more intensely of the oneness of God’s people who share the same goal despite the
differences of the two Testaments. Though we have to avoid an oversimplification to
comprehend the whole theological structure of the revised Institutes solely from that
point, the eschatological or teleological tone sounds crystal-clear in the present chapter.

3.4. The Life of a Christian

Another new chapter of the 1539 Institutes, “De vita hominis Christiani,” has
special importance for our study primarily because it is deeply related to Martin Schulze’s
epoch-making book entitled “Meditatio Futurae Vitae.” For Schulze, meditatio futurae
vitae is not just a title of one of the eventually divided chapters of the present section, but
a foundational concept to understand the whole system of Calvin’s theology represented in

97 Cf. “Evangelium siquidem hominum corda non in praesentis vitae laetitia detinet, sed ad spem
98 Later, in the dedicatory letter of Commentary on the book of Genesis, Calvin states that “Et certe
ideo nos sanctis patriarchis in spem eiusdem haereditatis Deus ad iunxit, ut superata quae nos separat
temporum distantia mutuo fidei et patientiae consensu eadem certamina obeamus” (Ep. no.1991, CO 15:199),
and again in its Argumentum that “Hic vero propria ecclesiae exercitia se proferunt : imo tanquam in speculo
nobis stadium ob oculos statuitur, quo nos cum sanctis patribus ad beatae immortalitatis metam eniti decet”
(CO 23:11-12).
99 Cf. “In tribus autem maxime capitibus hic insistendum est” (CO 1: 803, emphasis mine). See also
Matthias Simon’s criticism on Schulze in “Die Beziehung zwischen Alten und Neuen Testament in der
Schriftauslegung Calvins,” Reformierte Kirchenzeitung 82/4 (1932) 27.
100 Meditatio Futurae Vitae: Ihr Begriff und Ihre Herrschende Stellung im System Calvins, Ein
Beitrag zum Verständnis von dessen Institutio (Leipzig, 1901). See, our discussion in chapter 1.
101 Calvin, Inst (1559), III.ix.
his Institutes. Moreover, Schulze considered the term *meditatio* as a determined internal-orientation toward the future, not a merely occasional mental activity. Thus, he characterized Calvin’s theology as future-oriented and Platonically ascetic.

Ever since Martin Schulze’s work was published, Calvin’s idea of *meditatio futurae vitae* has been studied from various perspectives. Although these scholarly efforts have contributed to the understanding of Calvin’s theology and piety in their own ways, yet it seems to me that some of them were apt to go too far or say too much. It is partly because *meditatio futurae vitae* has been misused, in my view, as a technical term to represent Calvin’s eschatology, and also because the context in which scholars have dealt with it was too broad in many cases. As supposed, this “broader” method almost always accompanies with a danger to distort or, at least, lose sight of the original context of author’s ideas. Our concern in this section is, therefore, to clarify some characteristics of

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102 Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 1: “Es ist aber meine Absicht weiter zu zeigen, dass es sich dabei um einen Grundbegriff das Calvinischen Denkens handelt, um einen Begriff, welcher seine ganze Auffassung vom Christentum bestimmt und durch alle Teile seiner Institutio sich hindurchzieht.”

103 See, Schulze, *Meditatio Futurae Vitae*, 3. In Schulze’s observation, the synonyms of *meditatio* would be *desederium, studio flagrare, ardenrer expetere*, and *gemitu ac suspiris expetere* (Ibid).


Calvin’s view of the Christian life in its historical background, and to examine his terminology of “meditatio futurae vitae” in the original context and thus its significance to his eschatology.\footnote{Cf. Olivier Millet’s newly published critical edition of the 1541 French Institution de la religion chrétienne, vols. I & II (Droz, 2008) and his notes on chapter 17, “De la vie chrétianne” (vol. II, 1635-1650).}

3.4.1. Historical Background

a. Late medieval period

In the last chapter of “Mirror for Christians,”\footnote{Der Christenspiegel: des Dietrich Kolde von Münster, ed. Clemens Drees (Dietrich-Coelde-Verlag, 1954).} one of the most popular late medieval catechisms, Kolde teaches about “the five signs by which one can recognize a good Christian.”\footnote{Title of chapter 46: “v. tzeichen da men eynen goden cristen mynschen by bekennen sal” (Der Christenspiegel, 306).} Among them, the first two signs are noteworthy: “The first is that a good Christian grieves whenever he thinks of his sins.... The second is that a good Christian condemns himself to have God send suffering to him.”\footnote{“Dat eirste is dat: eyn goit cristen mynsche, also dicke als hey syner sunden gedencket, so bedroijft hey sich…. Dat ander is eyn goit cristen minsche ordelt sich seluer allet dat eme got tzo sendet tzo lijden” (Der Christenspiegel, 306). One may also recall that the top of “the seven deadly sins” is “arrogance” which is “the root of all sins (die wortzelen van allen sunden)” (Ibid., 128). The antonym of arrogance, in turn, may be self-denial.} This penitential spirituality has been popularized, for instance, through a notable lay-movement of Devotio Moderna and “Imitatio Christi,” one of its productions in the 14th century.\footnote{Ex. “Salome Stickten: A Way of Life for Sisters” in Devotio Moderna: Basic Writings, tr. John Van Engen (Paulist Press, 1988), 184: “the foundation of all sanctity lies rather in complete self-denial, mortification of the evil affections in our corrupt natures, and the conversion of our will to the Lord in an effort to conform it totally to his will”; and Imitatio Christi, 2:15, 59, 62, 63.} The belief or
spirituality demonstrated here (condemning oneself and receiving sufferings) appears expectedly in the works of Erasmus,\textsuperscript{114} and thus, more or less, the Reformers as well.

b. Reformation

In one of his most notable treatises, \textit{Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen}, Luther considers love for one’s neighbors as a central element of a Christian’s life. He maintains, in a concluding paragraph of the treatise, that “a Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and his neighbor.”\textsuperscript{115} This belief is largely shared among the Reformers, as follows:

\textbf{Melanchthon}

Finally, this [our good deeds] should proceed from a sincere heart in order that we may love all the people equally and candidly. You have here the sum of the whole Christian life, faith with its fruits.\textsuperscript{116}

\textbf{Bucer}

While each man conforms himself to the easy life and to live on the work of others, the Christian life demands quite the opposite, gives up even what is rightly due to him, is always ready to help others by his work....\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{114} Ex. \textit{Enchiridion}, passim., especially in ch.11 (LB V23 ff).

\textsuperscript{115} “eyn Christen mensch lebt nit ynn yhm selb, sondern ynn Christo und seynem nehstenn” (WA7:38).

\textsuperscript{116} “Demum, ut id ex sincero pectore proficiscatur, ut in universum omnes ex aequo et candide diligamus. Summam habes universae vitae Christianae, fidem, cum fructibus suis” (Philip Melanchthon, \textit{Loci communes theologici} [1521], in OM 21:182).

\textsuperscript{117} “… das sich doch yederman zu müßigondem leben und von frembder arbeit zu leben schicket. so das christlich leben sich gantz des widertheyls fleisset, sich auch begibt, des man im wol von recht schuldig wer, als bereit mit seiner arbeit andern zu helffen und vergebens von niemant nichts nemen sich haltend nach dem wort Jhesu: Es ist seliger geben dann nemen” (Martin Bucer, \textit{Das ym selbs niemant, sonder anderen leben soll, und wie der mensch dahyn kumen mög} [1523] in \textit{Martini Buceri Opera Omnia} [Series 1]: Deutsche Schriften, vol. 1, 59).
It must be noted here that both Reformers discuss about the Christian life in terms of “good works.” For them, love for neighbors was a criterion of goodness for the Christian life.

“Mortificatio” is another key-word in understanding the Reformers’ view on the Christian life. Discussing about the nature of baptism in Der große Katechismus (1529), Luther defines the Christian life as “a daily baptism,” that is, “the mortifying of the old Adam in us and the resurrection of the new man.” Melanchthon, a systematizer of Luther’s teachings, repeatedly emphasizes this aspect of the Christian life under the following headings of his 1521 Loci communes: The efficacy of faith, baptism, repentance, and participation in the Lord’s Table.

Finally, the issue of afflictions was also significant for Luther. According to the transcription of Luther’s Lectures on the epistle to the Romans, Luther criticized “those who venerate the relics of the holy wood of the cross so much outwardly and then flee from

118 “Diese zwei Stücke, unter das Wasser sinken und wieder herauskommen, deuten die Kraft und Werk der Taufe, welches nichts anders ist denn die Tötung des alten Adams, darnach die Auferstehung des neuen Menschen, welche beide unser Leben lang in uns gehen sollen, also dass ein christlich Leben nichts anders ist denn eine tägliche Taufe, einmal angefangen und immer darin gegangen” (Q.237, emphasis mine). Cf. the subtitle of Theologia Germanica: “Eyn edles Büchleyn, von rechtem vorstand, was Adam und Christus sey, und wie Adam yn uns sterben, und Christus ersteen sall” (WA I:376-377). This may be one of the reasons why Luther liked this book.

119 “Tolerantiam comitetur pietas, hoc est, ut adversa non modo coram hominibus placide feramus, sed etiam coram deo, gratias illi agentes, qui nos mortificet…” (OM 21:182).

120 “Sic tota vita Christiana est mortificatio carnis, et renovatio spiritus” (OM 21:212).

121 “Siquidem poenitentia mortificatio nostri est, in vitam, seu ut renovemur…. Neque alius est vita Christiana, nisi haec ipsa poenitentia, hoc est, regeneratio nostri” (OM 21:215).

122 “Neque vero vita Christiana est, nisi assiduo moriamur” (OM 21:221).

and abominate the tribulations and adversities of it.”

Luther rather asserts that “in Scripture tribulations are rightly called ‘the cross of Christ’,” and even that “it is not uncertain that whoever is yet neither be suffered nor be patient in tribulations should not, at least in the presence of God, be a Christian.”

Melanchthon also states in the Augsburger Bekenntnis (Confessio Augustana) that the cross, that is Christians’ suffering, is true mortification. We can hear the same tone of voice in the catechism of Hübmaier, an early and influential leader of the Anabaptist movement. Responding to the question “which is the shortest way through which man enters into eternal life,” he answers through the mouth of Hans as follows:

Through fear, need, suffering, misery, persecution and dying for the sake of the name of Christ Jesus, who himself had to suffer and thus enter into his glory.... Because where Christ is and lives, there he brings his cross with him on his back, and he gives each Christian his own little cross to carry and through it to follow him.

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124 Martin Luther, Die Nachschriften zur Vorlesung über den Römerbrief, on 5:3 “qui ligni sancte crucis reliquias externe tantum venerantur et tribulaciones adversitatesque per illam significatas fugiunt et abominantur” (WA 57/1:169).

125 Luther, Nachschriften zur Vorlesung über den Römerbrief, on 5:3 “Probatur, quia tribulaciones in Scripturis proprie vocantur ‘crux Christi.’ …Unde corollarie: Non est dubium, quod non sit Christianus, saltem coram Deo, qui necdum est tribulatus seu paciens in tribulacione” (WA 57/1:169).


127 Balthasar Hubmaier, Eine christliche Lehrtafel (1526), in Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte Bd. 29 (1962), Schriften, 325: “L. Wölher ist der aller nechst weg, durch den man eingeet in das ewig lebenn. H. Durch angst, nott, leyden, truebseligkayt, veruolgung vnd tödtung von wegen des namen Christj Jesu, wölher hat selbs leyden muesssen, vndnd also einingeen in sein glori…. Dann wo Christus ist vnd lebt, daselbs bringt er mit im auff dem rucken sein creütz, daruon gibt er einem yedlichen Christen ein aigenns creützlen ze tragen vndnd im nach zeuolgen.”
This figurative use of the “cross” as afflictions, most possibly based upon Jesus’ words spoken to his disciples,\(^\text{128}\) appears to have been widely common in this era.\(^\text{129}\)

As we shall see shortly, Calvin’s view of the Christian life is largely similar to the common belief of his age. Before turning to a close examination of Calvin’s writings themselves, a few more remarks should be made in regard particularly with Bucer’s influence on Calvin.

c. Bucer’s influence

T. H. L. Parker considers Calvin’s close relationship with Bucer, “a man of wide learning and mental penetration,” as one of the factors for the clarification and development of Calvin’s thought especially during his stay in Strasbourg between 1539 and 1541.\(^\text{130}\) However, as far as the 1539 *Institutes* is concerned,\(^\text{131}\) one might doubt how much Bucer in person actually could give influence on it since it was published within a year after Calvin’s arrival at Strasbourg (1538.9). Nonetheless, it is François Wendel who confidently points out Bucer’s influence not only upon the revised *Institutes* in general but specifically upon its last chapter. He states:

\[^{128}\text{Matt. 16: 24.}\]
\[^{129}\text{Cf. Erasmus, *Enchiridion*, ch.11 (LB V23:A-B). Cf. also, a passage from Budaeus’s treatise quoted by Bohatec (*Budé und Calvin*, 406) and some letters of Calvin’s contemporaries to which Jacques Pannier refers in the endnotes of his edition of *Institutes* (Jean Calvin, *Institution de la religion chrétienne*, vol. 4): A letter (1538) attached to Farel’s *Summaire déclaration* to Calvin (Ibid., 348); Farel to Etienne de la Forge, a Calvin’s friend, in 1534 (Ibid., 352); and Genevan people to Farel, in 1540(Ibid, 352).}\]
\[^{131}\text{We have already considered both similarity and difference between Calvin’s first *Institutes* and Bucer’s catechism in chapter 2.}\]
Calvin here could make use of his pastoral experience and of the reflections suggested to him by reading Bucer’s treatise, *On the Cure of Souls*, which had appeared the year before.\(^{135}\)

Likewise:

The whole chapter on the Christian life unfolds in an unmistakable Bucerian atmosphere, in which one can find without difficulty a reflection of the exchanges of views that had taken place between the two men.\(^{133}\)

Whatever “Bucerian atmosphere” means, I shall briefly look at the referred treatise and see if there is any considerable influence upon the chapter of the *Institutes*.

The full title of the Bucer’s work is *On the true cure of souls and the right pastor, as it should be ordered and performed in the church of Christ*.\(^{134}\) This treatise, as its title clearly shows, deals with the issue of pastoral care in the Christian church. The following is an outline of the content:

1. What the church should be
2. On the rule of Christ in his Church
3. How the Lord performs his pastoral office, and works for our salvation in his church through his legitimate ministers
4. How many ministers the Lord in his church has and uses
   - On the office of teaching and the spiritual discipline
   - On the office of physical need
5. On of what kind of people and how the Elders should be elected and appointed
   - On election and appointment of the verger

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\(^{133}\) Wendel, *Calvin*, 104: “Tout le chapitre sur la vie chrétienne se meut dans un climat bucérien très prononcé, où l’on peut retrouver sans peine un reflet des échanges de vues qui eurent lieu entre les deux hommes.”

\(^{134}\) *Von der waren Seelsorge und dem rechten Hirndienst, wie derselbige in der Kirchen Christi bestellet und verrichtet werden solle* in Martini Buceri Opera Omnia (Series 1): Deutsche Schriften (Vol. 7: Schriften der Jahre 1538-1539), ed. Robert Stupperich (Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1964), 90.
6. What should be important work and office of the pastor and verger for the flock of Christ in the whole and a certain individual
7. How the lost sheep are to be found
8. How to bring back the banished sheep
9. How the hurt and wounded sheep are to be dressed and healed
   On the imposed penance and the people who are prevented from the Lord’s Table for they have sinned something serious
10. How the weak sheep are to be strengthened
11. How the healthy and strong sheep are to be proved and to be pastured
   On the excluded people who make worse the church and will not hear it for improvement
12. On the obedience of Christ’s sheep
13. Summary of foregoing articles mentioned above

In the last parts of the treatise, Bucer refers to the “right,” “holy,” “good,” “blessed” Christian life, its progress, and also, at least twice, to “the cross” as afflictions. Otherwise, however, Bucer does not necessarily develop the discussion, as Calvin does, of what the Christian life is, since his concern is primarily with the cure of

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137 Bucer, *Seelsorge*, 204.

138 Bucer, *Seelsorge*, 204.

139 Bucer, *Seelsorge*, 204.

140 Bucer, *Seelsorge*, 216.

souls of the weak and sinful sheep. Moreover, we are uncertain, again, of Calvin’s language ability and of how much he was influenced by this German language treatise.\footnote{142} Bucer’s more important contribution to the clarification of Calvin’s view on the Christian life is, it seems to me, his \textit{Commentaries on Romans} (1536).\footnote{143} In his exposition of \textit{Romans} 12:1, for example, Bucer explains the verse in terms of “mortification”\footnote{144} and “denial-ourselves,”\footnote{145} the latter of which appears in neither Bullinger nor Melanchthon’s commentaries on the same verse. When we take it into consideration that Calvin’s idea of self-denial is firmly based on this verse, we cannot ignore the significance of Bucer’s \textit{Commentary} for Calvin.\footnote{146}

\footnote{142} The Latin version was first published in 1577. See, Bucer, \textit{Seelsorge}, 85. Although William C. Innes states that the influence of the Bucer’s treatise rather affected Calvin’s view of diaconal office in Geneva, the question remains. See, \textit{Social Concern in Calvin’s Geneva} (Allison Park PA, 1983), 106ff.

\footnote{143} Martin Bucer, \textit{Metaphrases et enarrationes perpetvae epistolae D. Pauli Apostoli}.... 1536.

\footnote{144} Bucer, \textit{Metaphrases}, col.457.

\footnote{145} Bucer, \textit{Metaphrases}, col.458: “... hoc primum omnium poscere, ut abnegemus nos met ipsos, & ipsi reformandos & innovandos addicamus”; and “Iam una hac ratione huius copotes evadere licet, si abnegemus nos met ipsos, & addicamus totos Deo, qui solus suo spiritu vetustate in nobis omne....”

\footnote{146} On the similarity of the interpretation of \textit{the Epistle to the Romans} between Bucer and Calvin, see, Joel Edmond Kok, “The Influence of Martin Bucer on John Calvin’s Interpretation of Romans: A Comparative Case Study” (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1993), 138-166, 147 in particular. As editors of Calvin’s \textit{Opera Selecta} suggest (OS3:423), Bucer’s \textit{Commentary on the Gospels} (1536) might also have given Calvin an influence of future-oriented spirituality or meditative life on the future life. Cf. August Lang, \textit{“Der Evangelienkommentar Martin Butzers und die Grundzüge seiner Theologie”} (1900) in \textit{Studien zur Geschichte der Theologie und der Kirche}, Bd.2, Heft 2. Furthermore, Bucer, in his \textit{Ein Summarischer vergriff der Christlichen lehre und Religion} (Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften, Bd.17, 1981, 121-150) in 1548, persuades to desire the heavenly or future life (Zum 27, idid., 140), and argues against “the Epiculians” that the true Gospel makes us bear afflictions because of love and that a true Christian could find the heavenly life by way of losing the earthly life (Zum 29, idid., 146). This, however, rather shows either an influence from Calvin, or just a common understanding among the two men.
3.4.2. **The early Calvin’s view of the Christian life**

It might be true that early Calvin’s study of moral philosophy is reflected in his later discussions about the Christian life.\(^{147}\) Even so, it is in *A tous amateurs de lésus Christ, et de son S. Evangile, salut*, or the preface to Olivétan’s New Testament that Calvin insists that the gospel of Christ is everything for Christians who bear his name.\(^{148}\) In this short writing, he repeatedly emphasizes that Christians should follow the way of Jesus Christ saying that:

> We know well that Jesus Christ has passed through the way which we have to follow, if we want to be his disciples.... Will there be afflictions, prisons, tortures, torments? But we know by the example of Jesus Christ that this is the way to arrive at glory.\(^{149}\)

We, once again, could hear a similar voice as we heard in Hübmaier’s catechism.\(^{150}\) What is intensified here is a way of life in accord with the Gospel of Christ, or *imitatio Christi*, to be a disciple of him rather than a Christian life in general. This young Calvin’s pure belief flows through the 1536 *Institutes* into its revised edition as well.

In fact, it seems that he has already had his basic ideas of the Christian life when he wrote the following passages in his first *Institutes* (italics mine):


\(^{148}\) “…sans L’evangile nous ne sommes Christiens” (CO 9:807).

\(^{149}\) “Mais nous sçavons bien que Jesus Christ a passé par tel chemin, lequel nous devons suyvre , so voulons estre ses disciples…. Seront ce afflictions, prisons, tortures, tormentz? Mais nous congoiins par l’exemple de Iesus Christ que c’est le chemin pour parvenir en gloire” (CO9:809). See, our discussions in chapter 3.

\(^{150}\) See, n.127 above: Balthasar Hubmaier, *Eine christliche Lehrtafel (1526)*, in *Quellen und Forschungen aur Reformationsgeschichte* Bd. 29 (1962), Schriften, 325.
Everything is said once for all when it is shown that Christ wants disciples who deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him (Matt. 16). He who has denied himself has cut off the root of all evils so as to seek no longer the things that are his own. He who has bored his cross has readied himself for all patience and gentleness. But the example of Christ embraces both this and all other duties of piety and holiness.

First, let everyone consider with himself how hard it would be for him to leave and renounce not only all his possessions but himself as well. Still, it is with this first lesson that Christ initiates his pupils, that is, all the godly (Matt. 16). Then he so instructs them throughout life under the discipline of the cross not to set their hearts upon desire of, or reliance on, present benefits.

Lest they [believers] fail amidst these great difficulties, the Lord is with them, warning them to hold their heads higher, to direct their eyes farther so as to find in him that blessedness which they do not see in the world.

Here appears a pattern, though not established yet, of the Christian life: self-denial, bearing a cross (=tribulation), and lifting up the head and eyes in suffering with longing for the future or heaven. Although Calvin discusses all these passages, like Melanchthon and

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151 Cf. Calvin’s own translation of the verse Matt.16:24 in his later Commentary on the Gospels reads: “Siquis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum, et tollat crucem suam, ac sequatur me” (italic mine).

152 “Sed omnia semel dicitur, cum ostenditur quod tales velit Christus discipulos qui semetipsum abnegent, et sublata sua cruce ipsum sequantur (Matth.16). Qui semetipsum abnegavit, malorum omnium radicem ejecuit, ne amplius quaerat quae sua sunt. Qui crucem suam sustulit, ad omnes patientiam ac mansuetudinem se comparavit. At Christi exemplum et haec et alia omnia pietatis ac sanctitatis officia complectitur” (OS 1:64).

153 “Primum quam durum sit, non modo sua omnia, sed se quoque ipsum relinquere et abnegare, reputent pro se quisque singuli et tamen hoc tirocinio discipulos suos, hoc est, pios omnes Christus initiat (Matth. 16). Deinde sic per omnem vitam sub crucis disciplina erudit, ne cor adiciant ad bonorum praesentium vel cupiditatem, vel fiduciam” (OS 1:67). See also, that “omissa nostrri ratione, nec spectata ulla nostra utilitate” (OS 1:110); and “…nihil sibi in totam vitam promittentes, quam perpetuae crucis tolerantiam” (OS 1:272).

154 “In his tantis angustiis ne deficiant, adest illis Dominus qui monet ut altius caput exerant et longius oculos coniciant, beatitudinem, quam in mundo non vident, apud se repertos” (OS 1:67).

155 One year later after the publication of the first Institutes, Calvin wrote to one of his friends a letter, so called, “De fugiendis impiorum illicitis sacris, et puritate Christianae religionis observanda.” In this letter, as he constantly describes what a Christian should or should not do, we come across to the following
Bucer, in the context of the law or good works, he seems to realize that the discussion of the law is somewhat different from that of the Christian life.\textsuperscript{156}

Beside such pattern of the Christian life, we should also touch here for a moment Calvin’s usage of the term “mortification,” especially in the first \textit{Institutes}.\textsuperscript{157} In the section on penance, Calvin himself admits that it is not his original idea that penance consists of two parts: \textit{mortificatio} and \textit{vivificatio}.\textsuperscript{158} For Calvin, the word “repentance” is interchangeable with “mortification.”\textsuperscript{159} In comparison with a philosopher’s life, he says, “the life of a Christian man is a continual effort and exercise in the mortification of the flesh, till it completely dies.”\textsuperscript{160} The same view of mortification is repeated in Calvin’s 1537 \textit{Instruction}\textsuperscript{161} and \textit{Confession}\textsuperscript{162} in more simplified forms. Although the terms

\begin{flushleft}

\textsuperscript{157} This word and its verbal form appear under the following headings of the 1536 \textit{Institutes}: the fourth commandment (OS 1:48), baptism (OS 1:128-129), and penance (OS 1:170, 172).


\textsuperscript{159} “Uno igitur verbo poenitentiam interpretor mortificationem” (OS 1:172).

\textsuperscript{160} “…vitam christiani hominis, perpetuum esse studium et exercitacionem mortificandae carnis, donee plane intereat” (OS 1:172).

\textsuperscript{161} “De penitence et regeneration” (OS 1:395) and “Du baptesme” (ibid., 412). Cf. their parallels of the Latin edition in 1538.

\textsuperscript{162} §8 “Regeneration en Iesus” (OS 1:421) and §15 “Baptesme” (ibid., 423), respectively.
\end{flushleft}
“mortification” and “self-denial” look quite similar, and as a matter of fact Calvin uses both terms almost interchangeably, though quite rare, in the 1539 Institutes, it seems that the former does not play a significant role in the development of his view of the Christian life. So neither go we further in examination of the term.

In sum, Calvin’s early view of the Christian life was mostly in common with his contemporaries' on the one hand. On the other hand, he regards the life of a Christian as a discipleship rather than a merely good work. He also quarried certain elements out of the rich spiritual tradition and employed them for his own purpose. Our next question is why and how he came to formulate a new chapter and thus to establish a pattern for the Christian life in the revised Institutes.

3.4.3. Formulation of the New Chapter on the Christian life

a. Uniqueness of the chapter

The chapter is unique on several points. First, in spite of the enlargement, division, and relocation of many materials of the Institutes throughout its successive editions, the text of this chapter has remained virtually same for twenty years except only minimal changes and additions. Secondly, and more importantly, it has been always located at the end of the

163 CO 1:690 and CO 1:1132.


165 In the 1559 Institutes, he describes the relationship between mortification / repentance and the Christian life (III:iii:16). According to his explanation, self-denial is the condemnation by the Spirit of uncleanness in the very wellspring of the heart, and other features of the Christian life are the external evidences that show sincere repentance (OS 4:72). In other words, the Christian life is a fruit or a mark of true repentance.
treatise until the final edition. Finally, the chapter was so well-organized and beneficial particularly for lay people’s everyday life that it became the first part of the *Institutes* to be published separately.\(^{166}\)

These facts, however, have not been fully taken into accounts of Calvin studies on the subject of the Christian life.\(^{167}\) For example, in his forward to *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life*, Ronald S. Wallace says that: “It is necessary, in studying Calvin’s teaching, especially on a subject like the Christian life, to read as widely as possible throughout his writings.”\(^{168}\) John H. Leith also insists of the necessity to place this doctrine “as far as possible, in the total theological context of his theology,” which requires all the writings of Calvin as source.\(^{169}\) In spite of general validity of these statements, it seems necessary to examine more carefully what Calvin intends to say in its original context of the 1539 *Institutes*. Questions we rather ask here are: What are sources for the formulation of this chapter? What brought Calvin to produce it? Why did he consider such topics as self-denial, bearing the cross, and particularly meditation on the future life, among others, more important for his view of the Christian life? The last question is of course crucial for our


understanding of Calvin’s eschatology. About the “source question,” it would be better to avoid making use of Calvin’s personal experience, even if it throws some light on the understanding of his motivation.\footnote{\textbf{170}}

b. Sources of the chapter on the Christian life

i. Melanchthon’s \textit{Loci communes}

The last chapter of the 1539 \textit{Institutes} is no exception among other new chapters which were formulated, especially in selecting theological topics, following Melanchthon’s 1535 \textit{Loci communes}. We will examine here in some detail the relation of the latter’s chapter entitled “Tribulation or bearing the cross” to the new chapter by our reformer. Here is an outline of Melanchthon’s argument on the topic:

1. Afflictions are not without God’s counsel and permission\footnote{\textbf{171}}
2. Afflictions happen to call us to repentance and to exercise our faith\footnote{\textbf{172}}
3. God requires obedience
   a. God commanded the church this obedience
      (1) That we may be conformed to the image of Christ
      (2) That we may show an obligated service to God
   b. Afflictions are not signs of anger
      (1) God loves the church so much
      (2) The purpose of sufferings is establishment of new eternal righteousness
      (3) In this life, even the saints are still weak and sinful, and subjected to afflictions

\textit{Ex. Christ; Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Israel, prophets and Apostles

\footnote{\textbf{170}} Cf. Pannier’s text and its notes: vol.4: 348, n.(241.a), 4:351, n.(261.b), and 4:352 (262.b-e). Faessler considers Calvin’s banishment from Geneva (1538) and the death of his cousin, Olivetan, as his “cross-bearing” experience and as one of the motivations to write the chapter. See, Marc Faessler, “Ce n’est pas une doctrine de langue que l’Évangile mais de vie,” in \textit{Actualité de la Réforme} (Labor et Fides, 1987), 129. Concerning Olivetan’s death, see, Calvin’s \textit{Letter to Farel} (Jan., 1539), no.158 in CO 10:314-316.

\footnote{\textbf{171}} OM21:528

\footnote{\textbf{172}} OM21:530
(4) The church must be conformed to the body of Christ
c. Afflictions are sacrifices to God
   (1) Obedience is good
   (2) Afflictions exhort or call us to penance
   (3) Afflictions become service and sacrifices\(^{173}\)

4. Invocation by faith for relief of indignation is also the purpose of afflictions\(^{174}\)

Excursus
1. Christian patience is much more wonderful than what philosophers teach
   (1) Comparison with impatience
   (2) Examples of what impatience brings
2. Patience is necessary
   (1) That we may keep obedience and faith before God
   (2) For the peace of the Church and governments
   (3) For his own peace\(^{175}\)

[The topic “On Prayer” follows]

The similarity between these arguments and Calvin’s discussions of “bearing the cross” is remarkable. We can find virtually all these thoughts in the parallel section of the

*Institutes*.\(^{176}\) As far as this section is concerned, therefore, it seems that Melanchthon’s

1535 *Loci communes* offered not only a topic but also subject matters for the formulation of

Calvin’s new chapter on the Christian life.\(^{177}\)

\(^{173}\) OM21:532

\(^{174}\) OM21:534

\(^{175}\) OM21:536

\(^{176}\) Ex. OM 21:528 (*Inst. III.viii.1*, indicated as the 1559 edition for convenience), 529 (III.viii.6, 8), 530 (III.viii.1-4), 531 (III.viii.1,7), 532 (III.viii.4), 534 (III.viii.4, 11).

\(^{177}\) It is noteworthy that various subjects in this topic also appear in Melanchthon’s *Commentary on Romans*, especially in chapter 12. For example, penitence, obedience and good work (OM 15:702-703); mortification (OM 15:702-703, 705-706); affliction or cross (OM 15:707). He refers to Christian patience and affliction also in the commentary on chapter 8 (OM 15:672). Since all these references, however, appear in the revised edition of the *Commentary* in 1540, Calvin might have been unable to look at it when he wrote his own commentary. See, T.H.L. Parker, *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans 1532-1542* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 2-4.
On the other hand, the following differences are also to be observed:

1. Calvin’s writing is more organized and refined than Melanchthon’s.

2. Melanchthon’s concern is to explain the meaning of tribulation and to speak of consolation\textsuperscript{178}; Calvin considers cross-bearing as a discipline and an essential part of the Christian life.\textsuperscript{179}

3. For Melanchthon, “afflictions are part of the law”\textsuperscript{180}; for Calvin, bearing the cross is “a part of self-denial”\textsuperscript{181} and thus living the Gospel.

4. For Melanchthon, afflictions are discussed under the issue of “the church”; Calvin does not mention the church.

5. Melanchthon discusses the significance of prayer as relief from afflictions\textsuperscript{182}; Calvin rather does the same in relation to affections\textsuperscript{183}.

6. Calvin’s emphasis on eschatological hope over tribulations is obvious.\textsuperscript{184}

Another difference, if I could add one more, is the location of the topic in each treatise.

Why, then, did Calvin locate the chapter in the very end of the 1539 \textit{Institutes}? What factor did work in that Calvin gave positive and eschatological meaning to the tribulation and considered it as one of the principles in the pattern of the Christian life? We will find

\textsuperscript{178} OM 21:528.

\textsuperscript{179} CO:1135.

\textsuperscript{180} “Et in summa afflictiones sunt pars legis, quis sunt poenae additae legi” (OM 21:529).

\textsuperscript{181} Title for the \textit{Institutes} (1559), III.viii: “De crucis tolerantia, quae pars est abnegationis.”

\textsuperscript{182} OM 21:536-542.

\textsuperscript{183} CO 1:1140-1142.

answers to these questions in another crucial source for the formulation of the chapter, namely, Calvin’s own *Commentary on Romans*, which must have been prepared simultaneously with the revision of the *Institutes*.\

ii. Calvin’s *Commentary on Romans*

According to opening sentences of the last chapter of the 1539 *Institutes*, which are different from those of the final edition, Calvin intended to write neither a voluminous treatise nor something like “the homilies of the fathers.” He rather determined to follow “the plan of the present work,” that is a textbook for theological students, and the “order” of the Scripture itself which “holds a most beautiful dispensation, and one much more certain than all the philosophical ones.” Just like Melancthon, it is particularly in *the Epistle to the Romans* that Calvin found this biblical order. For him, “the whole Epistle is so methodical that even its beginning is composed according to the rule of art.” Let us follow our reformer how he found this order for the topic of the Christian life through his exegetical work.

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186 CO 1:1123. In his preface to the *Homilies of Chrysostom*, Calvin writes that one of the lessons which we can learn from Chrysostom’s homilies is that “quid habuerint sacri conventus, quantoque cum pietatis profectu celebrati fuerint” (CO 9:838).

187 “praesentis…operis ratio” (CO 1:1123).

188 “…quin pulcherrimam oeconomiam tenet, ac philosophicis omnibus multo certiorum” (CO 1:1123-1124).

189 “Epistola tota sic methodica est, ut ipsum quoque exordium ad rationem artis compositum sit” (COE 13:7.13-14). All citations from the *Commentary on Romans* are of the 1540 edition based on the apparatus of Parker’s text.
Already in the “Argumentum” of his Commentary, where Calvin gives an outline of the content according to the traditional way, he introduces chapter 12 that “forms general precepts on Christian life.” The use of the term “Christian life” for the chapter is unique, at least in comparison with the other reformers.

On chapter 6 (a believer’s spiritual death and life with Christ), Calvin explains “mortification” of our flesh or sin and the Christian’s new life. Moreover, he not only considers “bearing of the cross” as “another fellowship as to the death of Christ,” but also relates it to “eternal life.”

Beside chapter 12, another great text for Calvin’s view on the Christian life is, as Melanchthon has already suggested, chapter 8. In the Commentary, Calvin repetitively refers to both “the cross” or afflictions in the present life and the glory in the future life as follows (italics mine):

190 “Duodecimum generalibus praeceptis Christianam vitam informat” (COE 13:9.84).

191 Cf. Heinrich Bullinger, In sanctissimam Pauli ad Romanos epistolam, Heinrychi Bulligeri commentarios (1533) and Melanchthon’s Annotationes in epist. ad Romanos, Phil. Mel. dispositio orationis in epist. ad Rom., and Mel. commentarius in epist. Pauli ad Rom. (OM 15). But Bucer uses the word “the Christian life” in the preface [Ad lectorem] of Book 3 of the Commentary, which provides expositions of chapters 12 and followings: “Dominus ad sit nobis, quo vel aliquibus ad frugem vitae Christianae nostra opera serviat” (Metaphrases, col. 454). Although Luther also refers to “Christian ethics” in his scholia on the chapter 12 (WA 56:440 and WA 57/1:215), we should note that his personal lecture notes on Romans was never published in the sixteenth century.


194 Comm. Rom., 6:7 (COE 13:122.24-27): “Est altera mortis Christi communicatio de qua loquitur Apostolus, quam saepe alias, tum 2. Corint.4, nempe cruces tolerantia, quam sequitur et vitae aeternae consortium.” Note that “2 Cor. 4” does not speak of “the cross” but many afflictions.

195 See, n.177 (OM 15:672).
8:18
The Apostle indeed compares not the worthiness of the one with that of the other, but only lessens the heaviness of the cross by a comparison with the magnitude of glory, in order to confirm the minds of the faithful in patience.\footnote{Comm. Rom., 8:18 (COE 13:168.7-9): “Neque enim dignitatem utriusque confert Apostolus: sed gravitatem crucis tantum elevat, comparatione magnitudinis gloriae, idque ad confirmandos patientia fidelium animos.”}

8:25
We spend our present life patiently \textit{bearing the cross} and tribulations....
It is characteristic of hope \textit{to look forward to future} and absent wealth....
When we console ourselves with the hope of a better condition, the feeling of present miseries is softened and mitigated, that they are borne with less difficulty.\footnote{Comm. Rom., 8:25: “crucem et tribulationes patienter ferendo, praesentem vitam transigamus” (COE 13:172.30-31); “Proprium spei est, futuris et absentibus bonis intentam esse” (172.36); “quia, dum melioris conditionis spe nos consolamur, mollescit ac mitigatur praesentium miseriarum sensus, ne sint adeo toleratu difficiles” (173.5-7).}

Moreover, in 8:30, Calvin considers “foredetermination [praefinitio],” which is distinct from “election [electio],” as “purpose and decree of the Lord by which he has ordained that the cross is to be borne by his people.”\footnote{Comm. Rom., 8:30 “illud Domini propositum ac decretum quo suis crucem ordinavit ferendum” (COE 13:178.6-7).}
He even connects the cross as “the humiliation of Christ” with Christian vocation and justification, that is, “our future glory.”\footnote{Comm. Rom., 8:30 (COE 13:177.39-178.3) “…illam cum Christi humilitate conformationem saluti nobis esse, gradatione utitur: in qua docet, sic cum vocatione, iustificatione, gloria denique nostra, cohaerere communicationem cucis.”}
Different from Melanchthon, again, Calvin regards the cross bearing as a Christian discipline in the present life and relates it apparently to the future glory.\footnote{For the similarity and difference in the commentary of Melanchthon and Calvin especially on chapter 8, see, Joel Edward Kok, “The Influence of Martin Bucer on John Calvin’s Interpretation of Romans: A Comparative Case Study” (Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1993), 133-137, especially 136. Augustine also discusses in \textit{De moribus ecclesiae catholicae}, chs.8-9 (PL32:1316-1317) around the biblical text of Romans 8 that all the saints must be suffered, yet does not have any future-oriented message. Parker} As far as this linkage of the
cross and future glory or the eschatological orientation of the cross is concerned, it seems that Calvin has established it as a pattern most probably through his own study of this book of the Bible, particularly its chapter 8.\textsuperscript{201}  

In regard with the subject of self-denial, we can unmistakably identify the basic text. That is chapter 12, especially verse 1. Before commenting the text itself, Calvin states the significance of the chapter as that Paul “nunc optimo ordine transit ad formandos mores.”\textsuperscript{202} Calvin’s recognition of “the best order” may explain the reason why the chapter on the Christian life has been located at the end of the editions of the \textit{Institutes} since 1539.\textsuperscript{203} Calvin then summarizes the central message of the chapter, from which all the duties of holiness are drawn, in consecrating ourselves and all our members to the Lord.\textsuperscript{204} This principle appears even more clearly in the comment on verse one. For Calvin, consecrating to the Lord means ceasing to live for ourselves and then determining all the actions of our

\begin{multicols}{2}

\textsuperscript{201} Cf. also, \textit{Comm. Rom.}, 8:35 (COE 13:182.33-34). The heaviest afflictions harass men so that they “neglect to meditate on a better life (meliorem vitam non meditantur).” Calvin added the following words elsewhere in later editions of the \textit{Commentary} : “Vult enim futurae beatitudinis expectatione erectos, animi altitumine superare omnes prasentes aerumnas : ut non reputent quales sint nunc, sed quales futuri sint” (171.12-14. An addition in the 1551 edition on 8:23), and “Sed diversis modis nunc ad futurae vitae meditationem, nunc ad reverentiam conspectus Dei hortari nos voluit” (279.21-23. An addition in the 1556 edition on 13:12). These additions clearly reflect the discussion in the 1539 \textit{Inst}. The relation of the cross to the meditation on immortality itself is not necessarily Calvin’s original, of course. See, for example, a passage from another French famous humanist, Budaeus, cited by Bohatec in his \textit{Budé und Calvin}, 406.


\textsuperscript{203} See, above, 3.4.3.a.

\textsuperscript{204} \textit{Comm. Rom.}, 12 (COE 13:255.7-9): “ita hic principium statuit, e quo omnes sanctitatis partes deducantur: nos scilicet in hunc finem a Domino esse redemptos, ut consecremus illi nos ipsos et omnia membra nostra.”
\end{multicols}
life in his service. By offering our body as a sacrifice to God, Calvin continues, Paul implies that we are not our own but God’s, and that it cannot happen unless we renounce ourselves and indeed deny ourselves. We have here the fundamental principle of Calvin’s view on the Christian life. It is also significant to note that he discusses the principle of self-denial in terms of “good works.” In other words, Calvin still has kept in mind the relationship between good works and self-denial, which was first mentioned in his 1536 Institutes.

Chapter 12 is not set aside solely for the discussion about self-denial, of course. It also teaches about the Christian “who restores his joy from the hope of future life, and patiently bears tribulations.” Calvin continues: “If our joy is maintained in the hope of future life, then patience will grow in adversities: for no sense of sorrow will be able to

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207 This faith is notably expressed in Calvin’s Letter to Farel in 1540, according to CO edition, after he has received a letter of call from the Council of Geneva. He had a feeling of anxiety and hesitation about returning to the city from where he was banished. Nevertheless, Calvin made up his mind and wrote that “sed quoniam non esse mei iuris momini, cor meum velut mactatum Domino in sacrificium offero” (CO 11: 99-100). Cf. also, Letter to the Council of Geneve (1541.2.19 / CO 11:158-159). This notion of Calvin’s belief reminds us of his well-known seal, namely, a heart dedicated to God. Although little is known about its origin, it does present Calvin’s spirituality effectively. In fact, Calvin repeats the phrase “we are not our own” but “God’s” many times in his discussion of the Christian life so that Calvin later in the 1559 edition of the Institutes entitled the chapter (III.vii) as “Summa vitae Christianae: ubi de abnegatione nostri.”


209 See, above, 3.4.2.

overwhelm that joy.”

This contrast between “sorrow” in the present life and “the hope of future life” show the pattern which we have seen in the discussion on chapter 8, despite the lack of the word “cross.”

There is one more thing to be noted in Calvin’s Commentary on Romans. Chapter 13 has been supposed to deal with the issue of authority as Calvin himself states in the Argument of his Commentary. In practice, however, Calvin intends to discuss the issue of the worldly authority still in the context of the Christian life even though he regards it as a distinct “locus.” Moreover, according to Calvin, there was some great necessity for Paul to write the chapter. It is actually necessary at any ages to defend the truth of the gospel against “some tumultuous spirits who believe that the Kingdom of Christ cannot be well elevated unless all earthly powers are abolished.” By “some tumultuous spirits,” Calvin undoubtedly has Anabaptists in his mind. Although he still intensifies the future aspect of the Christian life, he also emphasizes Pauline teaching of right attitude for the

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212 As a matter of fact, Calvin added the following sentence right after the preceding citation in the 1556 edition of the Commentary (COE 13:265.4-7): “Neque enim ad crucem ferendam se quisquam placide et quieto animo submittet, nisi qui extra mundum suam foelicitatem quaerere didicerit, ut spei consolatione, crucis acerbitatem mitiget ac leniat” (italic mine).


216 On the commentary on ch.13, Calvin repeatedly mentions “the life to come.”
present life here. This reminds us, after all, of the last section of the discussion on the Christian life in the *Institutes*,\(^{217}\) which deals with how to use the present life and its helps.

By saying this, of course, I do not mean that all the descriptions of the chapter on the Christian life correspond to those of the *Commentary*. As Calvin himself maintains in the 1559 *Institutes*, the purpose of the chapter was to collect not only from Romans but also from “various passages of Scripture” a pattern for the form of life.\(^{218}\) In fact, Calvin has perceived the pattern of suffering and glory in the believer’s life in various texts of the Old Testament as we have seen above. What I meant is, therefore, that it is most likely through his study of the *Epistle to the Romans* that he established and formalized the order of basic principles of the Christian life.\(^{219}\)

### 3.4.4. Conclusions

1. Calvin’s view of the Christian life was not his original but, by and large, the common belief in his age.

2. It seems that Calvin put more emphasis on the aspect of discipleship in the Christian life, considering Jesus’ words as its basic pattern of self-denial and bearing the cross.

\(^{217}\) *Inst* (1559), III.x.

\(^{218}\) *Inst* (1559), III.vi.1 (OS 4:146): “ex varis Scripturae locis rationem vitae formandae colligere.”

\(^{219}\) While a weak point of this conclusion may be the fact that the *Commentary on Romans* was actually published one year later than the *Institutes*, it might be meaningless to ask which comes first simply because Calvin considered both works as back and front of the same coin and most probably had worked on both simultaneously.
3. In formulating the last chapter of the 1539 *Institutes*, Melanchthon’s 1535 *Loci communes* played a significant role not only in setting a theological topic like other new chapters, but also providing materials for discussion on the subject of tribulations.

4. It is, however, Calvin’s own study of *Romans* that he developed and established the pattern or the order of basic principles of the Christian life.

### 3.5. Meditatio Futurae Vitae

#### 3.5.1. “meditatio” in the 1539 Institutes

In his first edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin touched upon the nature of the Christian life just in one sentence when he said: “The whole life of Christians should be a sort of practice [meditatio] of piety.”

This bud of *meditatio*, as it were, began to bloom with the next *Institutes*. Distinguishing *meditatio* from *didactio*, Calvin defines a function of *meditatio* as pondering upon certain subjects or objects like God’s wisdom, justice, goodness, and power, at length, turning them over in minds seriously and faithfully, and recollecting them repeatedly.

*Meditatio* appears in this sense not only in the section of the Christian life but also in such subjects as knowledge of man, the divine law, the

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220 “Tota Christianorum vita quaedam pietatis meditatio esse debet...” (OS 1:224).


222 *Inst* (1559), I.xiv.21 (OS 3:171, 1543 ed.).

223 CO 1:306 (II.i.3. Hereafter, cross-references to the 1559 edition are presented in parenthesis for convenience).

224 CO 1:433-434 (II.vii.12,13).
fourth commandment,\textsuperscript{225} justification by faith,\textsuperscript{226} the relationship between the Old and New Testaments,\textsuperscript{227} providence,\textsuperscript{228} and baptism.\textsuperscript{229}

Just as Calvin states in the very first chapter of the 1539 \textit{Institutes} that through the recognition of our own misery we are pursued to aspire to the goodness of God,\textsuperscript{230} the same is more clearly described in second chapter urging to consider what purpose human being was created for because “by the knowledge he should be aroused to meditation upon divine worship and the future life.”\textsuperscript{231} Thus, \textit{meditatio futurae vitae} is closely connected with the purpose of the human condition. Yet, since this foundational status of human being was defiled by sin, we have been torn between the heavenly and the earthly. It is only through faith, therefore, that we can contemplate the heavenly life.\textsuperscript{232} The divine law, particularly the fourth commandment, serves this purpose.\textsuperscript{233} As the Old Testament believers were

\begin{itemize}
\item 225 CO 1:401, 403 (II.viii.28, 30, 31, 33); and 1:405 (II.viii.34).
\item 226 CO 1:737 (III.xi.1); and 1:755 (III.xiv.2).
\item 227 CO 1:808 (II.x.10) and 1:818 (II.xi.1).
\item 228 CO 1:896 (I.xvii.8) and 1:899 (I.xvii.11).
\item 229 CO 1:979 (IV.xvi.16); 1:982 (IV.xvi.20); 1:983 (IV.xvi.21); and 1:985 (IV.xvi.23).
\item 230 CO 1:279 (I.i.1).
\item 231 “qua cogitatione ad divini cultus vitaeque futurae meditationem excitetur” (CO 1:307/ II.i.3).
\item 232 CO 1:472 and CO 1:686 (III.ii.40 and 42).
\item 233 The purpose of this commandment is that, being dead to our own inclinations and works, we should meditate on the Kingdom of God and practice the meditation in the ways established by Him (CO 1:404 /II.viii:28). Cf. discussions in chapters 3 and 4.1.
\end{itemize}
taught by God to disregard the earthly life and to meditate upon the heavenly, they all lived in this hope.  

In spite of a change of the character of the *Institutes* from “book of piety” in 1536 to a manual for “candidates in sacred theology” in 1539, the frequency of the term *meditatio* thus suddenly increased in the latter. This, however, may be no wonder if we understand what theological training is supposed to be in Calvin’s time. Erasmus, for instance, acknowledged the significance of “moral and spiritual character” of a theologian and even considered meditation on the Scriptures as a requirement for it. In fact, *meditatio* was one of the important terms in the revised *Institutes*, related closely to its new chapters. One might wonder if the term had always appeared in Calvin’s mind or if he himself had been exercising meditation while he was working through the revision of the *Institutes*. In this sense, we could say that the last chapter of the second *Institutes* which includes a full discussion upon *meditatio futurae vitae* seems to serve effectively as a conclusion of the whole treatise.

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234 CO 1:808 (II.x.10). See, above, 3.3.

235 See, above, 3.3.

236 See, above, 3.1.

237 n.221.


239 Calvin uses *meditatio* and *contemplatio* almost interchangeably in the 1539 *Institutes*. In the later editions, however, *meditatio* was used more frequently; the opposite was *contemplatio*. We cannot see any clear reason for that.
3.5.2. The Significance of “meditatio futurae vitae” in the Christian Life

According to Calvin, the last chapter of the 1539 Institutes was originally intended to present “some universal rule” beside the law for the Christian life from the biblical passages in an exhortative and devotional way as the homilies of the fathers. The Scriptures not only direct our life to God but also show an example whose model we should imitate in our life, namely, Christ our savior and the way to God. Although it has a Trinitarian character, the true “Christian life” is the life thoroughly and exclusively based on the gospel of Christ because this gospel is a doctrine not of the tongue but of life.

Even if no one can attain to the evangelical perfection in this world because of the weakness of the body, it still ought to be desired and striven toward. Thus, the earthly

240 “regulam quandam universalem” (CO 1:1123/ III.vi.1). In the final edition, Calvin also states his intention to show “a method of the form of life (rationem vitae formandae)” through the chapter. That recalls the opening sentence of Erasmus’ Enchiridion militis christiani: “compendiariam quaedam vivendi ratio” (LB V:1-2). In that sense, we might call the present chapter Calvin’s version of Enchiridion.

241 CO 1:1123 (III.vi.1). One of the patristic models or sources for Calvin is certainly that of Cyprian (CO 1:1147/ III.ix.5). Although Calvin mentions it only in the context of the fear of death, the influence of this treatise seems to extend throughout the whole discussion on meditatio futurae vitae, especially concerning hope in the future life (Cf. De mortalitate, chs. 2, 3, 18, 20, 26 et al). This treatise is called “one of the earliest contributions to the Christian literature of consolation” (Saint Cyprian: Treatises, trans. and ed. Roy J. Deferrari, in The Father of the Church: A New Translation, vol.36 [New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958], 195).

242 CO 1:1125 (III.vi.3).

243 CO 1:1125-1126 (III.vi.3).


245 CO 1:1127 (III.vi.4). Cf. the prefatory letter to Fancis I in 1536 Institutes (see, above, 2.3.).

246 CO 1:1127 (III.vi.5). Calvin also uses another notable expression “this earthly prison of the body” (CO 1:1127/ III.vi.5; CO 1:1146/ III.x.4; et al.). This Platonic expression is also found, with no wonder, in Erasmus (ex. De praeparatione ad mortem [ASD V-1,339]). On Calvin’s view of the human body, see, Margaret R. Miles, “Theology, Anthropology, and the Human Body in Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion,” Harvard Theological Review 74 (1981): 303-323.
life of a Christian man seems like a “journey” to the goal, that is, the blessed fellowship with the Lord. All that is important to us in this process is to look toward our mark with sincere simplicity and aspire to our goal.

The journey of the believers is not an easy one because many tribulations will occur and trouble them on the way. For the pious mind, however, it is necessary even in those tribulations to climb higher to the height to which Christ calls his disciples, that is, bearing one’s own cross. Bearing the cross is not to be done apathetically as the Stoics taught, but is to be accompanied with sorrows and tears. This “bitterness of the cross,” however, should “be tempered with spiritual joy” from which our praise and thanksgiving to the Lord will arise. This is the point when Calvin begins to discuss about the “spiritual joy,” namely, meditatio futurae vitae.

247 CO 1:1126 (III.vi.5).
248 CO 1:1127 (III.vi.5).
249 CO 1:1127 (III.vi.5). Calvin put this “sincere simplicity of mind” into another way in the 1559 edition, as follows: “acsi diceretur spirituale esse recte vivendi principium, ubi interior animi affectus sine fictione ad sanctitatem et iustitiam colendam Deo addicitur” (OS 4:150). This might be another reminder for Calvin’s seal of the heart dedicated to God. Cf. above n.207.
250 CO 1:1134 (III.vii.10).
251 CO 1:1135 (III.viii.1).
253 “crucis amaritudinem spirituali gaudio temperari” (CO 1:1143/ III.viii.11).
254 It is discernable that the argument in the commentary on chapter 8 of Romans is reflected here, or vice versa. See, above, 3.4.3.b.ii.
Calvin states the dual end of present tribulations: “to accustom ourselves to contempt for the present life and thus to be aroused to meditate upon the future.” And he carries his discussion forward following this order. According to him, it is a matter of fact that there is no one who does not desire the celestial life and that the vanity of this life is quite common. Indeed, says Calvin, that there is no middle ground for us between the worthlessness of the world or the intemperate love of it. Nevertheless, our minds, heart, and soul inevitably incline us to desire it. It is God, however, who can shake us out of our sluggishness and strive us to meditate upon the life to come.

Calvin turns his discussion then to a proper appraisal of the earthly life. He considers it not only as a counter-balance to the contempt of the present life but also as a preparation for the glory of the heavenly Kingdom. Calvin asserts that before exhibiting us the heritage of eternal glory, God wills by minor proofs to declare himself to be our Father. These earthly benefits are foretastes by which we are encouraged to look after the full revelation of them. Thus, the earthly life can be rightly disdained only in

\[\text{CO 1:1143 (III.ix.1).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1144 (III.ix.2).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1144 (III.ix.2).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1143 (III.ix.1).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1145 (III.ix.2).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1145 (III.ix.3).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1145 (III.ix.3).}\]
Calvin provides some illustrations for comparison such as exile-homeland, entry into life-a sepulcher, and perfect freedom-a prison. Even though only God decides the time of our death, Calvin still exhorts us to zealously long for death and constantly meditate upon it. His exhortation is so strong indeed that he even insists that “no one has made progress in the school of Christ who does not look forward with joy the day of death and final resurrection.” With this reference to Christ and the final resurrection, the whole discussion of meditatio futurae vitae now moves to its Christological ending.

Although this change of the subject seems to be rather abrupt, the object of meditation is no longer the vague future but the day of Christ’s return “when the Lord will receive his faithful people into the peace of his Kingdom.” On that day, the present tears of believers will turn to heavenly delights, while temporal entertainment of the

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264 CO 1:1146 (III.ix.4). Cf. Erasmus, De praeparatione ad mortem (ASD V-1,342) “Atque haec est magna christianaee philosophiae pars, quae nos morti praeparat, vt contemplatione rerum aeternarum ac coelestium dicamus temporariorum ac terrenarum contemptum.”


266 CO 1:1146 (III.ix.4).

267 “neminem bene in Christi schola profecisse, nisi qui et mortis, et ultimae resurrectionis diem cum gudio expectet” (CO 1:1147/ III.ix.5). Cf. De praeparatione ad mortem (ASD V-1,339), where Erasmus ironically criticizes those who are terrified of death despite their learning the complete Christian philosophy. For the view of death as a blessing, Athanasius, De incarnatione contra Apollinarem, 21; Chrysostom, Homiliae 21 de statuis ad populum Antiochenum, 5:6; and Augustine, De civitate Dei, 13:20, etc.

268 Interesting enough, there is no reference to “Christ” before this sentence in the discussion on the meditatio futurae vitae.

269 CO 1:1147 (III.ix.5).

270 “…quo Dominus in regni sui quietem fideles suos recipiet” (CO 1:1148/ III.ix.6).
ungodly will turn into unending lamentation. 271 “This indeed is our only consolation,” says Calvin in the concluding section. 272 Without this solace, we would fall into despondence or sybariticism. 273 Having cited an example of a psalmist, which illustrates both difficulty of a believer’s life in the present wicked world and significance of contemplation on the future destiny, 274 Calvin comes to a closing sentence:

If believer’s eyes are turned to the power of the resurrection, in their hearts the cross of Christ will at last triumph over the devil, flesh, sin, and wicked men. 275

Again, though the logical connection of this sentence with the foregoing illustration is not quite clear, the sentence itself appears to suggest an analogy between the cross-resurrection of Christ’s life and cross bearing- meditatio futurae vitae of the Christian life.

From our observations on Calvin’s terminology of meditatio futurae vitae especially in the discussion of the Christian life in the 1539 Institutes, it is certainly true that he suggests its relation to Christ’s works, 276 and yet it is only an aspect of the whole matter. We support neither the solely Christological interpretation of the term 277 nor its so-called

\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]
\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]

\[\text{CO 1:1148 (III.ix.6).}\]

\[\text{CO 1:1136/ III.viii.1).}\]

\[\text{CO 1:1125/ III.vi.3).}\]

\[\text{See, e.g., Quistorp, Last Things, 41; Niesel, Theology of Calvin, 212, n.63; and Wallace, Christian Life, 87, 92.}\]
“Johannine” realized eschatology for which we cannot see, at least in the 1539 Institutes, any “firm basis” as Leith points out. As Calvin himself already suggests in the opening sentence of the section, meditatio futurae vitae should be understood in contrast with, or more properly, in tense relation to contempt for the present life. Wallace is correct at this point when he says:

Meditatio is the opposite of contemptio, and as contemptio indicates a revulsion from this world, so meditatio equally implies movement of desire towards the life to come.

If the disciplines of self-denial and cross-bearing are related primarily to the contempt for the present life, we might say that meditatio futurae vitae is to the completion of both. It thus clarifies the direction in which the present life could be rightly used. It is in this sense that we can reasonably call it “an essential element in the Christian life.”

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279 Leith, Christian Life, 80.

280 CO 1:1143 (III.ix.1).

281 Although Calvin insists on the misery and vanity of the earthly life, he seldom argues the spiritual battle against sin or Satan as he does in the closing sentence mentioned above. It may be because sanctification is not a main subject here. Cf. Walter E. Steurmann, A Critical Study of Calvin’s Concept of Faith (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Edwards Brothers, 1952), 365.


283 Wendel, Calvin, 252.

284 CO 1:1150 (III.x.4).

285 Wendel, Calvin, 285.
3.5.3. A New Spirituality?

Instead of medieval asceticism, it is argued that the self-denial spirituality took more positive form among humanists and reformers. According to Lucien Richard, Calvin’s attitude toward the present life shows a sort of new spirituality, that is, “a spirituality of the service of God in the world” which is radically different from such medieval spirituality as *Devotio Moderna* but similar to that of Erasmus. Apart from more strict estimation on the spiritualities of *Devotio Moderna* and Erasmus, this might be generally true as far as Calvin’s view of how to live the present life is concerned.

On the other hand, his strong orientation to the heavenly life is also unambiguously evident especially in the 1539 *Institutes*. The editor of the works of this humanist insists that it is particularly Erasmus who has transformed the late medieval *meditatio mortis*.

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287 Richard, *Spirituality of John Calvin*, 125. It is also said that Calvin’s spirituality is even closer to Zwingli’s than Luther’s, as it is “to actualize God’s will in the world.” See, Fritz Büsser, “The Spirituality of Zwingli and Bullinger in the Reformation of Zurich” in *Christian Spirituality*, ed. Jill Raitt, vol. 2 (New York: Crossroad), 311.

which is often related to subjects of death and judgment in negative sense,²⁸⁹ into *meditatio beatae vitae futurae.*²⁹⁰ Calvin’s view of *meditatio futurae vitae* is certainly in this stream.²⁹¹ Nonetheless, it is also recognizable that Erasmus’ *contemptus mundi* seems more traditional and monastic,²⁹² and *ars vivendi* more existential or spiritual²⁹³ on the one hand; Calvin’s is more evangelical-historical²⁹⁴ or teleological²⁹⁵ on the other. If it is right to say that Luther departed from the monastic tradition of “*meditatio*” by replacing it with “*explicatio*” or external promise,²⁹⁶ we could even say that Calvin did the same by developing it, rather than replacing, toward a new direction. In short, while Calvin’s spirituality could be located largely in the medieval tradition, and much influenced by the


²⁹² See, Erasmus, *De contemptu mundi* (ASD V-1, 40-85).

²⁹³ See, particularly, the discourse of the devil and an uneducated man in *De praeparatione ad mortem* (ASD V-1, 384-387).

²⁹⁴ See, above our discussions on the relationship between the Old Testament and the New (3.3.2.).


sixteenth century humanistic spirituality, yet it was thoroughly reshaped or reformed by the Word of God.

Calvin’s hope for the future life was in fact a part of his own personal faith as demonstrated in his *Reply to Sadoleto* written one month after the completion of the revised edition of the *Institutes*:

Commendation of the future and eternal life is a worthy subject to sound in our ears day and night, be recalled constantly in memory, and kept meditating ceaselessly.... There is nothing indeed in which human being excels the lower animals, unless it be his spiritual communion with God in the hope of a blessed eternity.  

Generally, then, we deliver nothing in our discourses but whatever to arouse people to meditation and devotion of it.  

Calvin fully agrees with Sadoleto when he aroused the Genevan to despise the present good and aspire to the future because the theme of the future and eternal life is an appropriate subject for ceaseless meditation. Our reformer, however, criticizing Sadoleto’s intention to show off his own piety, states that it is not a good theology if it is without eagerness to illustrate the glory of the Lord for we are born first of all for God and not for ourselves. A Christian, therefore, should ascend higher than just seeking and securing the salvation of

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297 This is one of Calvin’s favorite expressions. Ex. *Geneva Catechism*, Q4 (OS 2:75), *Inst* (1559) I.iii.3, II.i.1, III.ix.1, and xxv.6. It must be a part of theological tradition of that the possession of immortal soul makes human beings distinguished from beasts. Cf. Aquinas, “In symbolum apostolorum scilicet ‘credo in Deum’ expositio” in *Opuscula Theologica* (Marietti, 1954), vol.2 (De re spirituali), 216 (1010): “anima enim humana assimilatur Deo in immortalitate, ex parte autem sensualitatis assimilatur bestiis”; and Erasmus, *Enchiridion militis christiani* (LB V12F) “si mens ista non fuisset indita, pecus eras.”

298 “Temetsi enim futurae aeternaeque vitae commendatio res est digna, quae nocte diuque auribus nostris insonet, quae assidue memoria repetatur, in qua medianda sine fine exercemur..... Nec sane aliud est, quo beatum homo antecellat, nisi spiritualis cum Deo communicatio, in spem beatae illius aeternitatis. Nec fere aliud agimus concionibus nostris, nisi ut omnium animos ad meditationem studiumque eius erigamus” (OS 1:463-464). For Calvin’s personal hope for the future, see also, his letter to the father of Louis de Richebourg, who was Calvin’s friend, in his death (1541.4 / CO 11:188-194, Herminjard VII:66-73).

299 OS 1:444.
his own soul. For Calvin, the glory of God is simultaneously both the foundation and the goal of our vita. Meditatio is, thus, not merely means for personal devotion but for ascending higher to that goal. This personal conviction of young reformer seems to have been thoroughly strengthened and theologized through the working process of the revision of the Institutes.

3.6. Conclusion

The appearance of the new Institutes must have given a quite different impression to the readers from that its first edition did, not only because of its volume but also of its arrangement of the topics. Particularly, those teachings in the last chapter (the self-denial, bearing the cross, meditation on the future life, and right attitude to the present life) might have been understood as final words of the whole treatise. Indeed, the chapter has effectively provided not just a spiritual and eschatological flavor, as it were, but also a teleological direction to Calvin’s theological enterprise of 1539.

For Calvin, the Christian life was not exactly the same thing as the ethical life directed by the divine law. It was, rather, gospel-centered spiritual consecration of self to God. This spirituality of self-dedication, however, did not necessarily mean the ascetic life, either. Calvin neither overestimated nor underestimated the present life. The question

300 OS 1:463.

301 If that were the case, the impact of the 1539 Institutes on readers’ spiritual nourishment, as well as on their doctrinal education, might have been tremendous.

302 This Calvin’s attitude may also be reflected in his way of time management. See, Max Engammare, On Time, Punctuality, and Discipline in Early Modern Calvinism, tr. Karin Maag (Cambridge, 2010), 16ff. Cf. also a matured Calvin’s commentary of Genesis on 2:8, for instance. Discussing about the meaning of Eden, Calvin argues it is not just for the happiness in the heaven but rather that “Nunc enim
was, instead, the spiritual orientation of a Christian who lives in the present-future/earth-heaven dynamics. It is in this context that Calvin’s use of *meditatio futurae vitae* must be understood. According to Calvin, *meditatio futurae vitae* functions both for contempt of the present life, comfort in tribulations, and hope for the future. Hence, it is a vital factor in the Christian life because it directs it in every respect to the right end or goal.

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versamur in hac historia, quae docet Adam fuisse divinitus ordinatum incolam terrae, ut temporalem in ea vitam agendo coelestem gloriam meditaretur…” (CO 23:37).
CHAPTER 4
ESCHATOLOGY IN A THEOLOGICAL DEBATE: \textit{PSYCHOPANNYCHIA} 
AND THE 1543 \textit{INSTITUTES}

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. Psychopannychia: Calvin’s Earliest Theological Work?

In 1542, the year after his return to Geneva, a small treatise by Calvin was published in Strasbourg. It is \textit{Vivere apud Christum non dormire animis sanctos, qui in fide Christi decedunt: Assertio},\footnote{CO 5:165-232.} or by more well-known title of its second edition in 1545, \textit{Psychopannychia},\footnote{\textit{Psychopannychia qua refellitur quorundam imperitorum error qui animas post mortem usque ad ultimum iudicium dormire putant.}} though the title means not “soul sleep” as often misunderstood but “the wakefulness of soul.” This writing has a curious prehistory as its two forewords suggest.\footnote{For basic introductions to this treatise, see, Emil Doumergue, \textit{Jean Calvin, les hommes et les choses de son temps}, I:441-468; Walther Zimmerli’s critical edition of \textit{Psychopannychia} (Leipzig, 1932), 1-14; Willem Balke, \textit{Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals}, tr. Willem Heynen (Grand Rapids, 1981), 25ff. See, also, Charles Dardier, “Un problème biographique: quelle est la date de la première édition de la Psychopannychia de Calvin?,” \textit{BSHPF} 19/20 (1870), 371-382; Augst Lang, “Die ältesten theologischen Arbeiten Calvins,” in \textit{Neue Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie}, II (1893): 257ff; Timothy George, “Calvin’s \textit{Psychopannychia}: Another Look,” in \textit{In Honor of John Calvin}, 1509-64, ed. E. J. Furcha (Montreal, 1987), 297-329; Jung-Uck Hwang, \textit{Der junge Calvin und seine Psychopannychia} (Frankfurt, 1991); and Olivier Millet, \textit{Calvin et la dynamique de la parole : étude de rhétorique réformée} (Paris : H. Champion, 1992), ch.14. For the text, we will use Zimmerli’s edition and indicate it in the footnotes by simply Zimmerli plus pagination.}

It was originally written in Orléans in 1534,\footnote{Zimmerli, 15-18. Some believe that a certain affair happened in Orlean around that time might have motivated Calvin to write this treatise. See, Balke, \textit{Calvin and the Anabaptist}, 33; Benoit, \textit{Jean Calvin: la vie, l'homme,la pensee}, 42f; Doumergue, \textit{Jean Calvin}, I:464-466; and George Huntston Williams, \textit{The Radical Reformation} (Philadelphia, 1962), 584f., n.11.} then revised in Basel in 1536,\footnote{\textit{Zimmerli}, 15-18. Some believe that a certain affair happened in Orlean around that time might have motivated Calvin to write this treatise. See, Balke, \textit{Calvin and the Anabaptist}, 33; Benoit, \textit{Jean Calvin: la vie, l'homme,la pensee}, 42f; Doumergue, \textit{Jean Calvin}, I:464-466; and George Huntston Williams, \textit{The Radical Reformation} (Philadelphia, 1962), 584f., n.11.} but was not yet published until 1542\footnote{\textit{Zimmerli}, 15-18. Some believe that a certain affair happened in Orlean around that time might have motivated Calvin to write this treatise. See, Balke, \textit{Calvin and the Anabaptist}, 33; Benoit, \textit{Jean Calvin: la vie, l'homme,la pensee}, 42f; Doumergue, \textit{Jean Calvin}, I:464-466; and George Huntston Williams, \textit{The Radical Reformation} (Philadelphia, 1962), 584f., n.11.} probably because Calvin took Capito and others’ advice seriously.\footnote{\textit{Zimmerli}, 15-18. Some believe that a certain affair happened in Orlean around that time might have motivated Calvin to write this treatise. See, Balke, \textit{Calvin and the Anabaptist}, 33; Benoit, \textit{Jean Calvin: la vie, l'homme,la pensee}, 42f; Doumergue, \textit{Jean Calvin}, I:464-466; and George Huntston Williams, \textit{The Radical Reformation} (Philadelphia, 1962), 584f., n.11.}
According to the first foreword, Calvin intended to refute a heretical error by this work. The error was not new at all. It has its origin in some Arabian teaching as early as the third century, and reappeared in the teachings of Pope John XXII in 14th century and eventually of “the Anabaptists” in Calvin’s time. As he admits himself, though, Calvin came to know the last’s teachings only through his friend’s personal notes. In fact, it is still difficult to identify who they actually were and what exactly they were teaching, when Calvin referred to “the Anabaptists.” At the time (1536) the second foreword was written,

5 Zimmerli, 18-21.

6 Editors of CO, however, were of the opinion that there were actually three editions of 1534, 1536, and 1542 (CO 5:xxxv ff.).

7 The reason why they were against its publication seems due to the historical situation rather than its content itself though Capito criticized Calvin’s exegesis. Cf. CO 10b:45-46 with 10b:52. Cf. also Bucer’s view (CO 10b:260). They might have tried not to cause another problem among the protestant camp beside the Lord’s Supper issue. Cf. Hans Scholl, “Karl Barth as Interpreter of Calvin’s Psychopannychia,” in *Calvinus Sincioris Religionis Vindex*, ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser and Brian G. Armstrong (1997), 301.


9 See the discussion below. See, also Zimmerli, 17, n.2.

10 Zimmerli, 16-17. For some historical background of the soul-sleep teaching, see Hwang, *Der junge Calvin*, 118-127.

11 Zimmerli, 16. Cf. Oberman’s note: “Though Italian debate around Pomponazzi establishes indeed how ‘current’ the problems of immortality were, they cannot explain Calvin’s reference to ‘anabaptist authors’. Since Calvin explicitly says that he had not seen these anabaptist tracts himself, he may well have relied on the information found in Zwingli’s Elenchus of 1527” (Heiko A. Oberman, *Initia Calvini: The Matrix of Calvin’s Reformation* [Amsterdam, 1991], 32, n.98).

12 It appears only once in the text itself. Scholars’ opinions also vary. According to George, there are three possible opponents called “the Anabaptists”: Italian philosophical speculation (ex. Pomponazzi, Servetus, Socinus), Evangelical Anabaptism (ex. Andreas Bodenstein), and Lutheran Soul-Sleepers. See, George, “Another Look,” 95ff, 302-312. In his opinion: “While we cannot rule out the influence of Italian philosophical speculation in various streams of radical dissent, Calvin’s opponents seem to have been thoroughgoing biblicists who were possessed of an acute apocalyptic eschatology” (“Another Look,” 311). Balke thought that Calvin’s targets in his treatise were French Paduans, Italian rationalists, Libertines, and Illuminists (*Calvin and the Anabaptists*, 33); or, as he put in other way, the enlightened spirits or the “modernists” of the age (ibid., 34). Although Hwang discusses on the soul-sleep defenders such as Pomponazzi, humanistic circle, as well as Luther and Karlstadt (*Der junge Calvin*, 118ff), he is of opinion.
however, the purpose of the treatise was slightly shifted. Although refuting the heretical teaching of the Anabaptists is still in his perspective, it became more important for Calvin to educate and guide the people, particularly ignorant or untrained,\(^{13}\) to the right way of teaching thoroughly by “the lips of Lord (\textit{ore domini})”\(^{14}\) though there are also quite considerable number of citations from Church Fathers in the body of discussion.

The ambiguity of circumstances of its publication caused some difficulty in the treatment of the treatise. Since it is a fact that the unpublished manuscript of 1534\(^{15}\) was definitely Calvin’s earliest work in his theological career, some scholars have tried to argue about his earliest belief in the work,\(^{16}\) and even concluded that it is his pre-conversion work because it has no anti-Roman polemic.\(^{17}\) On the other hand, however, as the treatise was that Calvin seemed to have less concern with specific antagonists than their “dogma” in his mind at the time of 1534 (ibid., 108f). For further discussion, see also, Williams, \textit{The Radical Reformation}, 581ff. and the introductory essay by Farley in Calvin’s \textit{Treatises against the Anabaptists and against the Libertines}, tr. Benjamin Wirt Farley (Grand Rapids, 1982), 19-24. According to \textit{Mennonite Encyclopedia} (1959), Calvin’s identification of a group believing the soul sleep with the Anabaptists is an error (s.v. “Sleep of the Soul” by Neff).

\(^{13}\) Zimmerli, 18-19. It is designed, however, also for those who have some knowledge of “\textit{loci communes}” and want to be thought themselves Christians (Zimmerli, 20).


\(^{15}\) Editors of CO, however, were of opinion that there were actually three editions of 1534, 1536, and 1542 (CO 5:xxxv ff.).

\(^{16}\) See, for instance, Karl Barth, \textit{Theology of John Calvin}, E.T., 153. Oberman also insists that “it [Psychopannychia] is an amazingly rich treatise for all who try to find the original thread in the labyrinth of Calvin’s later thought” (\textit{Initia Calvini}, 31). In fact, he believes that this treatise is Calvin’s first “Reformed,” that is Lutheran rather than Erasmian, publication because of the term of ‘\textit{assertio}’ in the original title; it is assurance based on the Scriptures not just opinions of theologians (Oberman, “The Pursuit of Happiness: Calvin between Humanism and Reformation,” in \textit{Humanity and Divinity in Renaissance and Reformation: Essays in Honor of Charles Trinkaus}, ed. John W. O’malley et al. (Leiden, 1993), 252, n.3).

\(^{17}\) Since Alexandre Ganoczy (\textit{The Young Calvin} [orig. \textit{Le jeune Calvin} published in 1966; E.T., The Westminster Press, 1987], 87), such scholars as Balke (\textit{Calvin and the Anabaptists}, 34), Hwang (\textit{Der junge Calvin}), and most recently George H. Tavard (\textit{The Starting Point of Calvin’s Theology} [William B. Eerdmans
certainly reworked and thus it is simply impossible to restore original writings, it is historically difficult to deal with it in the context of 1534 even if it truly does include Calvin’s earliest thoughts at its large part.

Calvin in 1542 was obviously no longer a humanistic-Catholic writer in his study, but a convinced Reformer who has not only published even the second edition of the Institutes both Latin and French and Commentary on Romans, as well as other ecclesiastical documents, but also attended several diets as a representative of Protestant side, and just returned into the turmoil of the city of Geneva to further reformation. Therefore, Psychopannychia was, at least in its published form, never a pre-conversion work. We should read it precisely in this historical context.

4.1.2. Significance of the Treatise for Our Subject

In his book on Calvin’s theology published in 1922, Karl Barth stated that in Psychopannychia “we have decisively important evidence of Calvin’s starting point and his

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18 See, Doumergue, Jean Calvin, I:466; Millet, Calvin et la dynamique de la parole, 442; and most recently, Richard Muller’s extensive discussion on the issue in “The Starting Point of Calvin’s Theology: An Essay-Review,” Calvin Theological Journal 36 (2001): 314-341.

19 Both editions were condemned in France in 1542.

20 In fact, it has been continually published with the same content up to 1563.
whole position in the Reformation.” Whatever the “starting point” means, inspired by Barth’s reevaluation of *Psychopannychia* and his seminar whose text was its recently published critical edition by Walther Zimmerli in 1932, Heinrich Quistorp’s study of Calvin’s eschatology appeared in 1941. In Quistorp’s estimation, however, Calvin’s teaching of the immortality of soul seems unbiblical despite of many allusions to the Scriptures, thus weakens the significance of the bodily resurrection. Accordingly, for Quistorp, it is “the fundamental problem of his eschatology.”

On the other hand, there have been also numbers of scholars who consider the differences in Calvin’s teachings from philosophical views like Platonism as more fundamental than the similarities. Even though it is an obvious fact, for example, that

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21 *Theology of John Calvin*, E.T., 153. Barth also maintains elsewhere that “the real life for Calvin is the future or eternal life, in a more pregnant, more sharply pronounced sense than for Luther. We could formulate this in a different way, as follows: when he visualized the salvation store which became clear to him through Luther’s teaching on faith and justification, he linked it more immediately than Luther himself to the thought of death and the life to come (Ibid., 205).

22 The “starting point” in Barth’s understanding is Calvin’s view of peace of conscience given by God’s forgiveness continuing even after death. For other views, see, for example, Tavard who considers the first line of *Psychopannychia* (God’s knowledge and self knowledge), which seems very much Augustinian, as the starting point of Calvin’s theology (Starting Point, 5); for Scholl, ‘unio Christi’ as taught in the same treatise (“Barth as Interpreter,” 303-306).


24 Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 95ff.


26 Charles Partee, “The Soul in Plato, Platonism, and Calvin,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 22 (1969): 279. Most notable difference is, without doubt, the doctrine of bodily resurrection to which Calvin
Calvin appreciates the philosophical, Aristotelian in this case, view of “faculties of the soul” at one place in *Psychopannychia*, Calvin does not endorses the entire Platonic tradition or utilizes philosophy no more systematically than historically just as an illustration of truth. In fact, Calvin is less enthusiastic about philosophical arguments than Erasmus, Zwingli, and Melanchthon.

In the historical perspective, it seems quite natural, as Oberman put it, for a 16th century reformer who was surrounded by notable humanists to make use, if not uncritically, of Platonic vocabulary in their writings. Besides, we should also recall here that Calvin has already criticized philosophical views of Plato and Aristotle on the nature and faculties of soul in his 1539 *Institutes*. It seems, again, anachronistic to argue Calvin’s view of

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27 Zimmerli, 23.


32 CO 1:314-315.
soul in *Psychopannychia* as if he knows nothing about the difference between philosophical
and biblical idea of soul at the time of its publication.³³

The doctrine of immortality of soul is not something to “divert” readers of
*Psychopannychia* to the problematic issue of the intermediate state of soul but the crucial
question which Calvin pursues in the treatise, ³⁴ though not ontologically but exegetically
and Christologically ³⁵ or soteriologically. ³⁶ Since denying the continuity of consciousness
of soul beyond death is practically the same for Calvin as disbelieving the resurrection
promise, ³⁷ as Charles Raynal states, his position “rather grew out of a practical struggle for
theological definition based on his own reading of Scripture, patristic sources, and the
requirements of his circumstances.” ³⁸

If we take this “circumstances” as those in 1542, then it seems to me that
*Psychopannychia* is a quite natural outcome of Calvin’s two formerly published works: the
1539 *Institutes* and *Responsio ad Sadoletum*. ³⁹ As we have seen in the previous chapter,

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³³ According to George, the nature of soul was one of the topics at a disputation which Farel and

³⁴ George, “Another Look,” 102.

³⁵ Cf. Thomas F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church: A Study in the Theology of the Reformation*
(Edinburgh, 1956), 93.


³⁷ Charles E. Raynal, “John Calvin’s Teaching about Eternal Life: Its Reformation Setting and

³⁸ Raynal, “Calvin’s Teaching about Eternal Life,” 79.

³⁹ Published together with Sadolet’s letter in Strasbourg in 1539 (OS I:441-489). Its French
translation appeared in Geneva in 1540 (*Recueil des opuscules, c’est à dire, petits traictez de M. Iean Calvin*
[Geneva, 1566], 131-175).
the former persuades readers eventually to meditate on the future life; the latter confidently defends the doctrine of justification by faith that assures the everlasting salvation of a believer in Christ, against Sadolet’s threat to the Genevan who would be damned at the last judgment by the suspicion of schism from the Catholic Church. Consequently, it is Psychopannychia, which strongly insists of a believer’s happiness in afterlife, that serves to confirm and even to promote Calvin’s view of the last things. It deals indeed not only with doctrines of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, but also with other eschatological issues such as the intermediate state, kingdom of God, last judgment, and eternal life. Psychopannychia is truly a treasury of Calvin’s eschatology.

Finally, I would like to point out Calvin’s awareness of the literary genre and style for writing the treatise, just like the cases of the 1539 Institutes and Romans Commentary. In its opening paragraph, Calvin states that his concern in the writing is not to explore the matter extensively but to treat it simply and clearly because the subject is matter of controversy. He knows what the best method is to refute an enemy. It is to display and

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40 In fact, such subjects of Psychopannychia as liberation from the body of death (Zimmerli, 52-53), resurrection of the body as a better nature (Zimmerli, 69-70), and the sheer joy of the Christian life (Zimmerli, 102) are deeply related to the discussions in the second edition of Institutes, particularly its last chapter. Cf. Torrance, Kingdom and Church, 91ff.

41 See, OS I:451ff.

42 See, OS I:454ff. However, Calvin has already stated, in the 1534 foreword of Psychopannychia, that there is no unity of the church except in Christ (Zimmerli, 17).

43 George, “Another Look,” 297.

44 Cf. Olivier Millet, Calvin et la dynamique de la parole (Geneva, 1992), 439-446.
explain the controversial topic distinctly and lucidly. As his words suggest, Calvin first indicates a subject of debate, then analyzes various opinions on it, and finally represents his own view. Even though the structure of the treatise itself may seem “chaotic,” this is neither a well-organized theological textbook nor a compact biblical commentary but a tract of disputation, consisting of biblical texts on the subject with their expositions and references to Church Fathers. By way of observing the treatise carefully, we thus shall see not only Calvin’s ability as an exegete of the Scriptures and as a debater, but also new developments, if any, in his eschatology at this stage of his career.

45 “Haec autem optima premendi stringendique adversarii, ne qua elabatur, ratio est, si controversiae caput ita designate dilucideque explices ac in medium proponas, ut quasi in rem praesentem manuconsertum vocare passis” (Zimmerli, 22).


47 Oberman, Initia Calvini, 30. If the confusion was not caused by the double revision of the treatise, it may be due to Calvin’s own way of discussion which treats the subject of immortality in three contexts, in Oberman’s view (Oberman, “The Pursuit of Happiness,” 268, n.50), or his shifting perspectives on the view of soul, as Engel suggests, which is almost as complex as his view of the imago dei (Engel, Calvin’s Anthropology, 161). Or, as Calvin himself stated in a letter to his friend Christopher Fabri (Libertet) on 11th September, 1535 (CO 10:51-52, ep.29 / Ioannis Calvini Opera Omnia, Series VI: Epistolae [Geneva, 2005], vol.1, 117, ep.22), the essay was a kind of “adversaria congestas, quam certo distinctoque ordine digestas, etiamisima forma quaedam esset ordinis,” and its structure had been actually untouched till publication? For a diagram of the structure of the treatise, see, Tavard, Starting Point, 194-195.

48 See, the statistic data of biblical citations in the text by Ganoczy, Young Calvin, 328, n.40. According to it, there are 277 biblical citations in Psychopannychia (148>OT, 129>NT); among OT citations, 59>Psalm, 21>Is, 12>Gen, besides 12>Job and 9>Eccl. Regarding last two books, it might be influence from Erasmus’ Praepatio or a common habit in 16th century.

49 See, R. J. Mooi, Het Kerk-en Dogmahistorisch Element in de Werken van Johannes Calvijn (Wageningen, 1965), 365; and, for citations from Augustine in particular, Luchesius Smits, Saint Augustin dans l’oeuvre de Jean Calvin, II (Assen, 1958), 61-62. For one of the most recent and extensive studies on the subject, see, Anthony N. S. Lane, John Calvin: Student of the Church Fathers (Baker, 1999).

50 See, words of praise by Henry Beveridge, a English translator of Psychopannychia, about Calvin’s promising excellence on his career as an exegete (Tracts, xvi) though we have to keep the fact in mind, again, that it was published after Commentary on Romans. On the other hand, the exegetical results in the text are different at times from those of his more matured commentaries. Cf. notes in the Zimmerli’s edition.
4.2. Historical Overview of the Doctrine of Soul after Death

4.2.1. Ancient Period

In the intellectual milieu of Greek philosophy, early Christian Fathers have sought after any distinctive way of expressing their belief on the soul. Like Plato, they basically considered soul as immortal, though not by nature but by a gift of God. They utilized philosophical arguments as long as they could prove immortality and resurrection are reasonable. What is the most important for them, nonetheless, is miraculous act of God who can even change the laws of nature.

In regard with afterlife, Justin and others believed that the departed souls entered first into Hades and they would remain there until the last judgment. The only exception is the martyr’s soul, which is immediately received into heaven. But even in Hades the good souls are separated from the bad ones, according to the Fathers, expecting their eternal salvation with enjoyment of beatitude.

For Augustine, the immortality of soul is essentially important because it is the life principle of human existence as a whole, though not in Platonic sense but in the sense

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54 Cf. Augustine, *De immortalitate animae*. 
that human beings are made in the image of God who is the source of life.\textsuperscript{56} Considering the departed souls, although it is for sure that Augustine believes human souls cannot be happy without turning back or being restored to God,\textsuperscript{57} it seems that he is uncertain about where they exactly go after death.\textsuperscript{58}

In his \textit{De Genesi ad litteram}, Augustine tries to answer a question of “why is it necessary for the spirits of the dead to receive their bodies in the resurrection,” maintaining that the human mind without the senses of the flesh after death cannot see the unchangeable substance as the holy angels see it.\textsuperscript{59} In other words, it seems to be only after resurrection that all saints can see God even though not corporeally but in their spiritual bodies.\textsuperscript{60} Augustine takes up this question again in the chapter 29 of the book 22 of \textit{De civitate Dei}, on “the quality of vision with which the saints will see God in the age to come,” and argues about it quite extensively; nonetheless, his conclusion comes to be very

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{55} Cf. Augustine, \textit{De civitate Dei}, 13:16-17, 22:26. One of the problems of Platonic idea is to identify human soul with God (ibid., 10:31) According to Tavard, “Augustine does not seek to establish the nature of the soul on the basis of its immortality but rather on that of its potential for knowledge” (\textit{Starting Point}, 7).


\textsuperscript{57} Cf. Augustine, \textit{Confessionum}. 1:1.


\textsuperscript{59} Augustine, \textit{De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecim}, XII:35(68): “Cur opus sit spiritibus mortuorum sua corpora in resurrectione recipere.” This treatise of Augustine is definitely one of the sources which Calvin read very carefully, though Calvin seems not to follow its argument so exactly or uncritically as Oberman suggests. Cf. “The Pursuit of Happiness,” 267, n.50.

\textsuperscript{60} Cf. Augustine, \textit{De civitate Dei}, 13:20, 22. “Spiritual body” for Augustine is an imperishable resurrected body united to God and filled with grace of Christ, distinguished from an earthly one though both bodies are same in their physicality (\textit{Enchiridion}, 91 and \textit{De civitate Dei}, 22:19,21).
\end{quote}
ambivalent. The ambivalence on the question of the beatific vision has brought a quite debate through the middle ages.

4.2.2. Medieval Period

According to Thomas Aquinas, the separation of soul from body can no longer retain the human nature as a whole, thus it is called by definition death. The separated soul is, therefore, not in via. It can not make it possible the process of a growing relationship with God. Thus, in Aquinas’ view, as Carlo Leget states, “immediately after dying the separated soul endowed with charity is united with God in the visio beata; and that without charity is separated from God” though there is the third way, that is Purgatory. What degree of participation in the visio beata or vita aeterna the soul could attain, however, depends on the amount of charity.

On the other hand, the significance of the body even after resurrection still seems ambivalent even for Aquinas when he deals with a question if the saints will see God with

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61 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 22:29 (“De qualitate visionis, qua in futuro saeculo sancti Deum videbunt”). Cf. Epistolae 92, 148, 162; and Sermo 277.


63 Aquinas, Summa contra gentiles, II:81.

64 See, Aquinas, Sentencia libri De anima, II:1 and Compendium Theologiae, c.152. Cf. Leget, Living with God, 78-79.

65 Leget, Living with God, 82. On places appointed for the departed souls, see, Summa theologiae, q.69. art.1.

66 Leget, Living with God, 215.

67 Leget, Living with God, 222.
the bodily eyes.\textsuperscript{68} Making a distinction of direct and indirect way of seeing, Aquinas denies
the former but affirms the latter. He seems to follow the Augustine’s view at this point.

The controversy on the beatific vision was furthered since Pope John XXII
preached two sermons in 1331. He preached that the souls of saints contemplated only the
humanity of Christ and would rest “under the altar” (Rev. 6:9) until the day of the last
judgment when they would fully enjoy the beatific vision of God with their resurrected
bodies.\textsuperscript{69} In other words, before then they can enjoy only an imperfect happiness.

Although John XXII withdrew his private opinions a day before his death,\textsuperscript{70} yet it
was not rejected officially until Pope Benedict XII’s constitution, \textit{Benedictus Deus}, was
issued in 1336.\textsuperscript{71} The document unmistakably states that souls of the saints, for which
purgation is unnecessary or already done, can “plainly, clearly and openly” see the divine
essence even before the last judgment.

\textbf{4.2.3. Reformation Period}

In the history of controversies over the teaching of soul, the 16th century does not
start with a German Reformer but an Italian philosopher, Pietro Pomponazzi. Following
Averroes’s interpretation, he taught the Aristotelian idea of soul in his \textit{De immortalitate}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{68} Aquinas, \textit{Summa theologiae, supplementum}, q.92, art.2. Cf. Aquinas, “In symboolm
apostolorum,” 216(1010)-217(1017).

\item \textsuperscript{69} See, Bynum, \textit{The Resurrection}, 283ff. and Joseph N. Tylenda, “Calvin and the Avignon Sermons
any doubt concerning the immortality of the soul (Tylenda, “Calvin and the Avignon Sermons,” 38). See,
also, Oberman, \textit{Initia Calvini}, 33.

\item \textsuperscript{70} See, “Ne super his” in Denzinger-Schoenmetzer, \textit{Enchiridion Symbolorum} (DS), 34\textsuperscript{th} ed., no.990-991.

\item \textsuperscript{71} DS (34\textsuperscript{th} ed.): 1000-1001.
\end{itemize}
animae (1516)\(^{72}\) that it could be argued that the soul was essentially mortal because it neither operated nor existed without body. Despite the fact that Pomponazzi distinguished philosophical arguments and theological ones, his view was condemned at the 8th session of the Fifth Lateran Council in 1513.\(^{73}\) Nonetheless, the speculative arguments among Italian philosophers on the subject became popular, and it really did come to threaten the medieval structure of sacramental grace and grip of papacy on the souls of men.\(^{74}\)

Luther, who has rediscovered the salvation of human being by faith alone and thus destructed the medieval system of penance, was interestingly not so much concerned with the issue of soul *per se* because it seemed to him too philosophical.\(^{75}\) His primary concern, which was purely biblical,\(^{76}\) was rather with *peace* and *rest* in Christ than *unconsciousness* of soul.\(^{77}\) Therefore, Luther’s notion of “sleep” after death\(^{78}\) is not, as often misunderstood, a view of soul-sleep but simply an analogy to peaceful natural sleep which indicates the

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\(^{72}\) The English translation, with an introduction by John Herman Randall, is found in *Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (ed. Ernst Cassirer et al., University of Chicago Press, 1948), 257-381.


\(^{74}\) See, Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 24. He considers Psychopannychiasm as an Italian counterpart of German sola-fideism or Swiss predestinationism (Ibid., 20ff).

\(^{75}\) Against the separation of soul and body (WA Tr. V5534; and WA43:481), Luther criticized the Fifth Lateran Council decree in its use of Aristotelianism (WA 7:425; 2:226; and 30/III:304). According to Quistorp, Luther was more acutely aware than Calvin of the contrast between biblical anthropology and philosophical dualism (*Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 101). And/or probably because he expected the immediate resurrection? See, for example, WA 10/III:194. Cf. Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, 101.


certainty of resurrection. On the other hand, Melanchthon, unlike Luther, argued a traditional and natural-philosophical topic of soul though, like Luther, in more biblical way.

Though still in terms of the medieval framework of *Ars bene moriendi*, Guillaume Farel insists in his *Sommaire* that a believer of Jesus Christ is not afraid of death and will commend his soul to the Lord, who receives it after the pilgrimage of this life, and take rest waiting for the resurrection of his body when his life hidden in the Lord Jesus will be fully declared.

It is Zwingli, however, that we encounter major refutations against “the Anabaptists” and their erroneous teaching of soul-sleep. In his posthumous *Christianae Fidei Expositio* (1531), dedicated to King Francis, Zwingli provided a compact but significant argument in terms of the doctrine of eternal life.

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79 Oberman states that “From his first statement in 1522 onward, the sleeping of the souls (dormire) has for Luther the connotation of ‘quies’, the ‘rest’ so important to Calvin…. To sleep, Luther writes, is not to be dead, but to be certain of the resurrection. WA46, 470, 17f (1538)” (*Initia Calvini*, 31, n.94). It is, therefore, false to contrast Calvin with Luther.


81 Cf. *Le sommaire de Guillaume Farel: réimprimé d’après l’édition de l’an 1534 & précédé d’une introduction* (Google eBook, accessed March 10, 2011), ch.40 (De la preparation a la mort): “Ainsi recommandant tout a nostre Seigneur, arme de la justice de Iesu christ par vraye foy, par laquelle Iesus est tout nostre, en ioye desperit pretent son repos, louant & remerciant ce bon pere qui luy a pleu mettre fin a ses miserer, le tirant hors de ce corps de peche, tellement qu’il ne pechera plus: mais reposera attendant la resurrection de son corps, ou pleinement sa vie sera declairee, laquelle est cachee en nostre Seigneur Iesus.” Note also that Col.3:3, a biblical proof for the last part above, is one of Calvin’s most favorite texts for his eschatology.


Refuting Anabaptists’ view, he first gives a brief discussion about soul’s vitality by way of philosophical argument. Then, he goes on to attest the same by referring to the biblical verses, mainly from the Gospel of John. He then maintains that a believer already enjoy a foretaste of the life of heaven even in this present life. The soul-sleep view, on the other hand, seems just ridiculous to Zwingli because if the soul being now alive and enjoying in God sleeps after death, the life of a believer would be better in this world than afterlife. Moreover, that blessed present life in Christ would never be “everlasting” if it were interrupted by sleep in the world to come. In other words, for Zwingli, the eternal life which can be given in this world through faith in Christ must continue beyond death. He insists that the souls of the faithful immediately after death “fly upward to heaven, to be joined to and to enjoy the eternal felicity.” Thus, Zwingli persuades the king to look forward to the day when he can see “the divine essence itself, and all his attributes and powers in his appearance.” That is the beatific vision. Although Zwingli’s view on the subject is basically traditional, what is characteristic here is his emphasis on the present status of the believer’s happiness which should continue and be completed afterlife.

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84 John 5:24, 3:36, 17:24, 17:3, 14:3 in order.

85 He also points out the Hebrews’ use of the word ‘sleep’ for ‘dying’ (ZW6/V:132). See also ZW6/V:188f.

86 ZW6/V:130-131, “Credimus ergo animos fidelium, protinus ut ex corporibus evaserint, subvolare coelo, numini coniungi eternoque gaudere” and “…visurum esse primum numen ipsum in sua substantialia, in sua specie cunque universis dotibus opibusque illius fruiturumque his omnibus non parce, sed ad satietatem….”

87 Interestingly, Hubmaier, an ex-priest and a 16th century Anabaptist, also shows a similar view as far as the state of eternal felicity is concerned. See, Hubmaier, Eine christliche Lehrtafel (1526), in Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte Bd. 29 (1962), Schriften, 325: “Leon. Was ist das ewig leben. Hans. Es ist ein ewige, sichere vnd freudenreiche anschauung Götlichen angesichts….”
Similarly, yet even earlier than Zwingli’s work, Bullinger has supplied two fold arguments both philosophical and biblical for the same topic in his small pamphlet *Quod animae a corporibus separatae, non dorminant, sed cum Christo in coelis vivant* (1526). Philosophically, according to Bullinger, soul is essentially vital and perpetual, and thus does not sleep; biblically, with allusions to many passages, he emphasizes the departed souls never sleep but live peacefully with Christ in heaven.

Although the Swiss Reformers unanimously said that the heretical teaching of soul-sleep was the view of the Anabaptists, it is still debatable if it is true. According to Heiko Oberman and Heinold Fast, leading Anabaptists like Karlstadt (Andreas Bodenstein) and Westerburg did not teach “mortality” of soul in any form in their tracts, even if they mentioned the “sleep” of soul. By the term like “soul sleep in the Abraham’s bosom,” for example, what they insisted is the life beyond death and Christ as our consolation for the fear of purgatory and the useless mass for the dead. In fact, Fast points out, the teaching that Bullinger maintains is exactly the same as that of the Anabaptists which he tried to

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88 *Heinrich Bullinger Werke* III (Theologische Schriften), vol.2 (Theologischer Verlag Zürich), 127-133.


refute. Oberman also indicates that Karlstadt discusses the resurrection from the perspective of regeneration (the awakening of soul by grace) in the present life just as Calvin does in his *Psychopannychia* which we now turn to examine in detail.

4.3. Calvin’s Arguments for the Immortality of Soul

After some methodological introduction, Calvin begins his treatise by clarifying the topic with which he is going to deal, namely the human soul. Then, he gives a brief overview of philosophers’ idea on it, as well as a detailed consideration of its biblical idea, coming up to the first point of his proposition that the human soul is a substance [substantia] distinct from the body. Calvin now turns his discussion to attest his second point, one of the main topics of the treatise, that “the soul, after death of the body, remains surviving provided with sense and intellect” or “the immortality of the soul.”

Based on Christ’s words in Matthew 10:28 (“Fear not those who can kill the body…”), Calvin reasonably deduces a logical outcome that “either the soul survives after death, or it is false that tyrants have no power over the soul.” He then moves on to examine some puzzled texts of the Scripture.

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94 Fast, *Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer*, 27.
96 For the structure of *Psychopannychia*, see Tavard, *The Starting Point*, 194f.
98 *Zimmerli*, 33: “Eam ipsam animam ab interitu corporis superstitem manere sensu ac intelligentia praeditam.”
4.3.1. “Spirits in prison” in 1 Peter 3:19

In Calvin’s view, the word “prison” means the state of expectancy in which the holy Patriarchs saw the light of redemption in Christ from a distance. The meaning of the text, therefore, is that Christ in spirit exhibited to the spirits of the dead his virtue of redemption which brought benefit to the pious, but confusion to the unbelievers. Though Calvin is not ignorant of objections to this view, it is quite obvious to him that, as I Pt. 4:6 clearly suggests, the gospel was preached to the dead.101


Following Church Fathers (Ambrose, Tertullian, Gregory, Irenaeus, Origen, Cyprian, and Jerome), Calvin defends the historicity of this story mainly because Lazarus is named in it. Even if it were a parable, he argues, it must have some reality behind.103 Calvin, then, discusses specifically about the rest of soul designated by “the bosom of Abraham.”104 For him, the word “rest” is an equivalent of “sleep” in his opponents’

101 Zimmerli, 37.
103 Zimmerli, 39.
104 Tertullian recognized “the bosom of Abraham” as an intermediate place for the souls of the righteous until the consummation (Adversus Marcionem IV, 34). But Calvin, in his following discussion, seems to be more influenced by Augustine’s view of it. See, for example, Gen. ad lit. XII:33(63) “Neque enim Abraham, vel ille pauper in sinu eius, hoc est in secreto quietis eius, in doloribus erat” and 34(65) “Quanto magis ergo post hanc vitam etiam sinus ille Abrahæae paradisus dici potest, ubi iam nulla tentatio, ubi

terminology though it should be understood neither as sloth, lethargy, nor something like intoxication which they attributed to the soul, but as “tranquility of conscience and security, which always accompanies faith but is never complete nor established in its total till after death.”

The peace, which believers could enjoy even in this earthly life, is based on the gospel because it makes possible for them to see both God as their father rather than a judge, and themselves as children of grace rather than of wrath. Although believers on earth have to fight against their own remains of the flesh, and even if their consolation does not always give them perfect calmness, they will be eventually able to rest and subside with God when they are stripped off of the flesh and its desires. It is the highest degree of peace. Thus, John in Revelation, depicting the throne of God’s glory with a rainbow that is the sign of covenant between God and man, described the blessedness of those who died in the Lord as the rest from their labors because of this covenant (Rev.14:13). This is “the bosom of Abraham,” Calvin insists, who embraced the promises made to his seed and in
fact “saw His day and was glad (John 8:56).” Accordingly, all the elect of God will rest in the bosom of Abraham where they enjoy God fully without weariness. It is this peace as the end of all goods that Augustine regards as an equivalent to the eternal life.

For Calvin, this rest is “a heavenly Jerusalem,” that is, “a vision of peace, in which the God of peace gives himself to be seen by his peace-makers, according to the promise of Christ” or the place of peace, “where, as long as wholeheartedly intent on seeing God, they have nothing better to which they might turn their eyes or direct their desire.” In fact, their desire to see the supreme glory of God will be never completed till the judgment day.

4.3.3. Immortality of Christ’s Soul as the Ground of Ours

Calvin wonders on what ground the opponents have hope of resurrection except the fact that Christ rose. Since Christ is both the first-begotten of the dead and the first-fruits of those who resurrect, we also die and rise again. Calvin, then, asks the soul sleepers if

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109 Zimmerli, 42-43.
110 Zimmerli, 43.
111 Ex. De civitate dei, xix (ch.11).
112 Zimmerli, 44: “visio pacis, in qua deus pacis dat se videndum suis pacificis iuxta Christi promissum (Matt. 5:8-9).” Cf. Augustine, Gen. ad. lit., XII:28(56), where he also designates Jerusalem “vision of peace.”
113 Zimmerli, 45: “Ubi dum toti animo et aspectu in deo haerent, nihil habent melius, quo avertant oculos aut desiderium retrahant.”
114 Zimmerli, 45.
115 Zimmerli, 45.
116 Zimmerli, 45.
Christ was sleeping while he was awake for their salvation. On the contrary, Christ could never be extinguished by death either in human nature or in divine. Therefore, Calvin concludes, the soul never lost its life though the death was a separation of body and soul.\footnote{Zimmerli, 47.}

One of the curious arguments which Calvin provides for the immortality of Christ’s soul is with the story of Isaac (Gen.22).\footnote{Zimmerli, 48f.  The whole discussion might have been influenced by such a work of the Fathers as Theodoret’s \textit{Dialogues} in which not only the issue of soul and body but the typology of Isaac’s story is discussed.} As the book of Hebrews suggests (11:19), Isaac is a type of Christ, especially his resurrection so that Calvin interprets the story figuratively: the ram, an irrational animal killed for Isaac, represents the body; the binding of Isaac, the soul. Thus, just as Christ’s soul was released from prison, so ours also are set free before they perish.\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.} In other words, if anyone thinks that the death of Christ caused a sleep of soul, Calvin warns, he would be in Apollinarian heresy.\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.}

Positively, Calvin discusses that if Christ lives in us without end as Paul insists,\footnote{Ex. Col.3:3, Gal.2:20.} neither can our souls engrafted in him be ended by any death.\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.} This, of course, is quite clearly stated by Jesus himself in the Gospel of John\footnote{John 5:24, 6:40, 6:54.  Calvin also refers to John 11:25-26 and 8:51 to refute the opponents who believe that Christ promised us not both the resurrection and the eternal life but only the former (Zimmerli, 50-51).} Calvin only wishes he could

\footnote{Zimmerli, 47.}

\footnote{Zimmerli, 48f.  The whole discussion might have been influenced by such a work of the Fathers as Theodoret’s \textit{Dialogues} in which not only the issue of soul and body but the typology of Isaac’s story is discussed.}

\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.}

\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.}

\footnote{Ex. Col.3:3, Gal.2:20.}

\footnote{Zimmerli, 49.}

\footnote{John 5:24, 6:40, 6:54.  Calvin also refers to John 11:25-26 and 8:51 to refute the opponents who believe that Christ promised us not both the resurrection and the eternal life but only the former (Zimmerli, 50-51).}
perceive of the nature of the kingdom of God and the eternal life which already exist in believers.  

4.3.4. 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 ("Earthly and heavenly dwellings")

When the Apostle mentions “the life” which we shall be clothed upon and mortality shall be swallowed up of, the opponents take this notion as a reference to the Day of Judgment (v.10) when we appear with resurrected bodies. Calvin wonders why they stick so much to body rather than spiritual blessings. For Calvin, the meaning of the text is fairly simple and manifest. There is a better home which the Lord has prepared for us so that we shall not be naked even when we are stripped of earthly dwelling. “Christ is our clothing,” Calvin says. And when we depart from our body, that is “a kind of wall” separating us from God, we shall perceive His presence not by faith but by sight. According to Calvin, the opponents think on the contrary that we shall be far more separated from God at death. If that is true, he maintains, we are happier now than afterlife. 

The Scriptures teach quite opposite. As the mortification of the flesh is the quickening of the spirit, when the war between the spirit and the flesh ceases at death, the

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124 Zimmerli, 50.
125 Zimmerli, 52ff.
126 Zimmerli, 52.
127 Zimmerli, 53.
128 Zimmerli, 53.
129 Zimmerli, 54.
soul cast off from filth and no longer subject to the tyranny of the flesh, will be truly spiritual and abide in tranquility. Calvin thus accuses the soul sleepers as not only erroneous but also rebellious against God’s works in his saints.

4.3.5. *Matthew 22:32* (“God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”)

Against the opponents’ view that the acknowledgement of God as God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob occurs only at the time of resurrection, Calvin argues that Christ here refuted Sadducees who denied not only the resurrection of the dead but the immortality of the soul as well. Since God is God of the living and all things live to him, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still living another life not just by his presence but by his power.


In the book of Revelation, “white robes” are given to crying souls of martyrs under the altar in heaven. Unless they are pillows for sleepers, Calvin speaks ironically, they are for the awake, designating “the beginning of glory, which the divine liberality bestows upon martyrs while expecting for the day of judgment.” A white robe also symbolizes joy and festivity as we see in the story of a prodigal son.

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130 Zimmerli, 54.
131 Zimmerli, 55.
132 Zimmerli, 56.
133 Zimmerli, 56.
134 Zimmerli, 57.
Moreover, crying souls of the dead indicate that they were not sleeping but rather expressing their feeling. In fact, John describes a twofold resurrection, as well as a twofold death, both of the soul before judgment and the body itself. And it is this first resurrection through which the souls can get to the beatific glory represented by white robes.


Calvin considers this text as one of the most critical texts of the Scriptures against the soul sleepers because Christ called a thief to the joys of his kingdom on the very day of death. Although the opponents make an objection by quoting 2 Peter 3:8 ("One day is with him as a thousand year"), he refutes them by interpreting the verse as a kind of expression of God’s accommodation to human sense. The text rather means that even a thousand years are just a single moment in comparison with the eternal God.

Another objection, the opponents made, is that in Hebrews 13:8 “today” means the New Testament time and “yesterday” the Old, thus we should not take “today” literally. This view is totally wrong, Calvin states, because Christ would not have been before the Old Testament time if he was in “yesterday.” More importantly, if “today” means the time between Christ’s incarnation and last judgment, then the thief would enjoy the paradise, instead of sleep, even before the judgment.

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135 *Zimmerli*, 57.

136 *Zimmerli*, 57-58.

137 *Zimmerli*, 58. Cf. Calvin’s exegesis on the same text in his commentary, where he does not even touch the word ‘today’ though he neither doubt about the thief’s blessed rest after death.
4.3.8.  **Conclusion**

Now, Calvin turns his discourse for encouraging the believers of the church, “a pilgrim on the earth,” with some promises in the Old Testament\(^\text{138}\) by which the evangelical truth is sustained. He sums up what he has argued so far about soul or spirit as follows:

Spirit is the image of God, like whom it is active, understand, and is eternal. As long as it is in the body, it exerts its powers; when it departs from that prison, it returns to God. It enjoys God’s sense meanwhile while it rests in the hope of blessed resurrection. This rest is the paradise for it. The spirit of the reprobate, while it waits for the terrible judgment, is truly tortured by that anticipation…. To inquire beyond it is to plunge into the abyss of God’s mysteries….\(^\text{139}\)

It is always enough for Calvin to go as far as the Spirit teaches through his words. When the divine word stops, the human wisdom must stop, too.

4.4.  **Calvin’s Further Refutation against Soul-sleepers’ Views**

Calvin then moves on to further his arguments by defeating the opponents’ views, especially their understanding of biblical texts, one by one. We will pick up only some of them for our concern.

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4.4.1. First Argument (1 Corinthians 15:45/ vision of Ezekiel)

According to soul-sleepers, human soul is nothing other than animal one. One of the key texts is 1 Corinthians 15:45 (the first Adam and the last). Calvin admits that the Scriptures often attribute a word “living soul” to the beasts.\footnote{Zimmerli, 61.}

The text, however, relates to the time of resurrection when Christ shall receive us into his glory, and when the animal body will be not only quickened but also made spiritual by the soul in a manner beyond our comprehension.\footnote{Zimmerli, 64.} Thus, we shall be not a different thing but a different person (\textit{non aliud}...\textit{sed alius}) exalted above nature of this world by way of participation in the glory of God.\footnote{Zimmerli, 64.} Apostle’s intention here was to contrast these two stages and not to describe the nature of soul itself. The text thus does not support the opponents’ arguments.

The sleepers also refer to the vision of raised dry bones in the book of Ezekiel in which the human soul is depicted just as a power and faculty that may disappear at death and be gathered again at the resurrection.\footnote{Zimmerli, 64-65.} Calvin, on the other hand, maintains that the things viewed by the prophet are spiritual and thus impossible to understand without corporeal symbols\footnote{Zimmerli, 65.}; it is, therefore, inappropriate to make a discussion based on such passages.

\footnote{Zimmerli, 61.}{\footnote{Zimmerli, 64.}{\footnote{Zimmerli, 64.}{Calvin here refers to Tertullian and Augustine.}}\footnote{Zimmerli, 64-65.}}
4.4.2. Second Argument (meaning of death)

Even if the Scriptures seem to state, as the opponents think, that the immortality of the soul was destroyed when the soul itself lapsed (Gen. 2:17), the soul exists beyond death for the immortality of soul consists in a perception of good and evil, and thus the children of disobedience shall feel eternal hell fire. For Calvin, death is something other than the annihilation.\textsuperscript{145} It is only the body made of dust, as the book of Job clearly says (10:9, 12), that will return to the earth, not the human soul.\textsuperscript{146}

In fact, the death of the soul is very different, Calvin argues.\textsuperscript{147} For him, it is “to be without God, to be forsaken by God, and to be left itself.”\textsuperscript{148} In contrast, what Christ brought us is the reign of life redeeming and renewing the soul from the death to be like in its original state before the fall. Since the power of death has now begun to be conquered by the victorious work of Christ, based on Pauline discussions in 1 Corinthians 15 Calvin argues,\textsuperscript{149} the common death which we all experience is for the elect “a kind of natural transition to the highest degree of immortality” rather than a punishment.\textsuperscript{150}

\textsuperscript{145} Zimmerli, 66.

\textsuperscript{146} Zimmerli, 66.

\textsuperscript{147} Zimmerli, 67.

\textsuperscript{148} Zimmerli, 68: “Deo carere, a deo desertam esse, sibi relictam esse.”.

\textsuperscript{149} Zimmerli, 70-71.

\textsuperscript{150} Zimmerli, 71: “magis est electis naturalis quidam transitus ad summum gradum immortalitatis…..”
4.4.3. Third Argument (on the word “sleep”)

There are many biblical references employing the term “sleep” for the dead. And yet it is just a description of external appearance of the departed. Although the ancients called sepulcher a sleeping place, they did not imagine that souls of the dead were laid there to rest, but only their bodies. Hence, Calvin concludes that nowhere in the Scriptures is the term sleep applied to the soul whenever it is supposed to specify death.

4.4.4. Fourth Argument (Ecclesiastes 3:18ff.)

The passage like “who knows whether the spirit of the sons of Adam ascends upwards, and the spirit of beasts descends downwards” in the book of Ecclesiastes (3:18ff) is only applicable for those who have hope neither for future life nor resurrection. For the believer, in Calvin’s understanding, it is quite certain that their spirit ascends upwards and retains its immortality.

4.4.5. Fifth Argument (the kingdom of God, already/not yet)

Calvin severely criticizes the opponents’ view that there is only one last judgment, referring to the texts like Matthew 24:31, 18:41, 25:34, and Daniel 12, and that thus neither

151 Zimmerli, 71. References are made to Acts 7:60, John 11:11, 1 Thess. 4:13, Job 14:7-12.

152 Zimmerli, 72.

153 Zimmerli, 73: “Ubi probatum est nusquam inveniri in scriptures dormiendi verbum attributum animis, quoties pro morte legitur positum.”

154 Zimmerli, 73-75.

155 Zimmerli, 75-76.
blessedness nor misery is established before that day, because those texts have nothing to do with “sleep” of soul.

In regard with the afterlife status, Calvin is in the opinion, as we have seen elsewhere, that our blessedness is always in progress up to that day which shall conclude and terminate all progress, looking forward to that very day when the glory of the elect and the goal of ultimate hope be completed. For Calvin and probably the opponents as well, the kingdom, which is also called “salvation,” “reward,” and “glory” in the Scriptures, is nothing but the union with God. As our blessedness comes to its perfection, so does that union or the kingdom of God in the last day. If these points are retained, Calvin says, it would be quite in vain to prove that the believers do not enter the kingdom immediately after death. It should rather be said that what has already been begun is to be perfected then.

In Calvin’s view, God already reigns in his elect with the guidance by his Spirit, and protects those who have “the mark of the Lamb in their foreheads” from the powers of darkness. Nevertheless, his kingdom will properly come to its completion only when he

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156 Zimmerli, 76.  
157 Zimmerli, 77.  
158 Zimmerli, 77.  
159 Zimmerli, 78.  
160 Zimmerli, 78.  
161 Zimmerli, 78.  
162 Zimmerli, 79.  
163 Zimmerli, 79.
will apparently manifest his glory to his elect for salvation and to the reprobate for confusion. In other words, though the kingdom is not yet fully come, it is already in some measure there in the elect.\textsuperscript{164} As the Scripture unmistakably teaches, therefore, believers must live “a hidden life with Christ” until the day of his glory.\textsuperscript{165}

Back to the status of the departed in the Lord, they are said, on the one hand, not to possess the kingdom of God because they have not yet reached the summit of their felicity; on the other hand, they are also said to be happy because they both perceive God being propitious to them, and see their future reward from a distance, and rest in the sure anticipation of a blessed resurrection.\textsuperscript{166} Consequently, the souls of the saints are in peace after death. Even though there are still battles against flesh and blood on earth, we will celebrate our triumph when we put off the body of sin.\textsuperscript{167} “This is our end,” Calvin insists, “this our goal.”\textsuperscript{168}

4.4.6. \textit{Arguments from Ecclesiastical Tradition}

These views of Calvin are sustained not only by the Scriptures, but also by the ecclesiastical tradition that has been handed down to us through those whom have carefully

\textsuperscript{164} Zimmerli, 79.

\textsuperscript{165} Zimmerli, 80. This (Col. 3:3) is one of Calvin’s favorite passages for his view of last things. Cf. \textit{Le sommaire de Guillaume Farel: réimprimé d'après l'édition de l'an 1534 & précédé d'une introduction} (Google eBook, accessed March 10, 2011), ch.15 (Concerning Preparation for Death).

\textsuperscript{166} Zimmerli, 81.

\textsuperscript{167} Zimmerli, 82.

\textsuperscript{168} Zimmerli, 83: “Haec meta, hic scopus noster.”
and reverently treated the mysteries of God.  

The church fathers to whom Calvin refers here are Tertullian, Irenaeus, Chrysostom, and Augustine, though he added Bernard to this list in the 1545 edition of *Psychopannychia*. Calvin even accepts otherwise curious view of Augustine on the stages of the progress of soul toward the final perfection, as far as it illustrates the rest of the soul in afterlife.

Further arguments from the New Testament passages

To the opponents’ question “what need is there of the resurrection if we are happy before it,” Calvin declares, expounding once again the chapter 15 of the first Corinthian, that our future blessedness will be in vain without the resurrection because it designates not only the recovery of our bodies from corruption but also the life after death. In other words, the spirits of saints can happily rest afterlife just because they are in the hope of the blessed resurrection.

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169 Zimmerli, 83.
170 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, c.21 and *Adv. Marcionem*, li.4.c.34.
173 Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, li. 12 c.9; li.13 c.8 et al.; *Ep.* 166 (ad Hieronymum) c.2; *De eccl. dogmatibus* c.46; *Enarr. in ps.*36 serm. 1:10.
174 See, Zimmerli, 84, n.a. and n.2. See, discussion below.
175 Zimmerli, 85. See, Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 33(70)-36(81).
176 Zimmerli, 86.
177 Zimmerli, 86-88.
178 Zimmerli, 88. Calvin attests this by referring to Heb. 11 regarding ancient patriarchs.
Calvin then treats another objection against the case of Tabitha (Ac.9:40) that an injury must have been made to her, who was back to the evil world, if her soul lived the happy rest after death. On the contrary, Calvin argues, whatever the state of soul would be after death, it is still true that “for us to die is gain, and to be with Christ is better” (Phil.1:23). And it is divine mystery and mercy to will us to live in some way and sanctify the elect on the earth that Christ might be glorified both in our life and in our death.

4.4.7. Further Arguments from the Psalms

Now, Calvin is going to explore the texts of seven psalms which the soul sleepers employed to defend their views. They maintain that both believers and unbelievers experience the same lot after death going into the earth with all their thoughts, thus their spirits as well, to be perished. Calvin refutes these claims through his exegesis attesting pointlessness, misunderstanding, and contradiction of their arguments on the one hand, and indicating simple meaning of the texts on the other. According to Calvin, we would neither fall away nor perish unless the Lord, who is only immortal, withdraws his

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179 Zimmerli, 90.
180 Zimmerli, 90-91.
182 On Ps. 82:6 (Zimmerli, 91-92).
183 On Pss. 146:4 and 78:39 (Zimmerli, 92-93).
184 With quotations from Job (14:1), Isaiah (40:6), Psalm (103:13), Ecclesiasticus (18:8-10), as well as Ireaeus (Adv. haeres. lib. 5). Zimmerli, 93-95.
185 If the spirit does not return, as the opponents say, there is no resurrection which they retain nevertheless (Zimmerli, 93).
mercy from us. Rather, as the book of Wisdom or more certain words of God show, the just will be in eternal remembrance.

Calvin then discusses on “death” in certain depth dealing with the texts like Psalms 88:11, 115:17, 30:9, Isaiah 38:18, and Ecclesiasticus 17:26. In his view, besides its natural meaning as a dissolution of life or the lower region (infernus) like the grave, the Scripture employs the term to signify “the anger and dejection of God.” The word “infernus,” in particular, it may mean “abyss and confusion” as we can see especially in the book of Psalms. In the New Testament, too, “hades,” an equivalence of “infernus,” appears to mean the condition of the condemned by God rather than the locality. And this must be a case in the creedal expression of “descended into hell.”

In contrast, those whom the Lord visits in kindness are said in the Scriptures to “live.” Hence, Calvin asks rhetorically, “Why do they shudder so at the name of death, if they feel a merciful and gracious God to them?” They will rather escape from this world of temptations and disquietude into “the greatest ease and blessed rest (summum otium et

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186 Zimmerli, 95.
188 Zimmerli, 96-97.
189 Zimmerli, 97.
191 Zimmerli, 98.
193 Zimmerli, 99: “Cur sic horrent ad nomen mortis, si deum misericordem ac sibi propitium sentient?”
beatam requiem)” and even will be awaken at his time to glory.¹⁹⁴ Then, Calvin further illustrates the truth by taking for example the lives of saints like Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Job, and Moses who embrace death with a willing mind in response with the words: “Ecce ego adsum, domine.”¹⁹⁵

All this happened, according to Calvin, just because of Christ’s vicarious works done in our nature particularly through his suffering and death on the cross.¹⁹⁶ And this forsakenness is the biblical meaning of “death” as we can see in the psalms of 88 and 30, and in the song of Hezekiah.¹⁹⁷ Calvin sums up the discussion as follows:

In sum, I acknowledge that death in itself is an evil when it is the curse and penalty of sin, and that it is not only by itself full of terror and desolation, but also really drives those to ultimate desperation who feel that it is inflicted on them by an angry and punishing God. The only seasoning, which can temper its bitterness, is to know in the agonies that God is the Father for them, and to have Christ as a leader and companion.¹⁹⁸

Without this seasoning, people just consider death as confusion and eternal perdition, and thus cannot praise God in their death. Calvin now quite plainly clarifies the meaning of the

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¹⁹⁴ Zimmerli, 99.

¹⁹⁵ Zimmerli, 99. Cf. the discussion of the similarity between OT and NT in the 1539 Inst. in chapter 3.

¹⁹⁶ Zimmerli, 99-100.

¹⁹⁷ Zimmerli, 100.

¹⁹⁸ Zimmerli, 101: “In summa fateor mortem ex se malum esse, cum sit maledictio et poena peccati et cum ipsam per se plenam esse terroris ac desolationis, tum vero in ultimam desperationem eos depellere, qui sentiunt eam sibi infligi ab irato et puniente deo. Unum est condimentum, quod tantam eius acerbitate temperet, inter eius angustias cognoscere deum sibi esse patrem, Christum habere ducem ac comitem.”
expression “the dead will not praise thee” by taking a further illustration from the book of Baruch (2:17). 199

Although Calvin picks up four more alleged passages from the book of Job, 200 they are no difficult texts at all for him to deal with to demonstrate either the misunderstanding of the opponents or their proper meaning. He knows that there are more texts to be discussed. In his judgment, however, he has dealt with all the passages he has in his hand except some pointless or odd (doubtful in their authority like the 4th Esdras and the 2nd Maccabees) texts though he believes that even those are on his side. 201 Calvin concludes the whole treatise by calling the readers’ attention to that the Catabaptists are the authors of the dogma of soul-sleep, from which so many monsters have been fabricated and are daily being fabricated. 202

4.5. After Psychopannychia

The publication of Psychopannychia was not a single and somewhat odd event. It is actually related to Calvin’s other treatises in various ways. Especially in his third (1543)

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199 Zimmerli, 101-103. Against the opponents who might allege that Calvin’s interpretation is an allegorical one, he insists that the verse may be taken literally. If the word “praise” means, as they say, to proclaiming divine benefits among others, it would not happen for those who are in heaven because they just live with and enjoy God, and thus not speak to each other. But Calvin is cautious enough not to go further into this kind of speculation. Zimmerli, 102-103.

200 Zimmerli, 105ff (3:11-19, 7:7, 17:1, 34:14, with some other passages from Ecclesiasticus, whose author’s authority is doubtful for Calvin, and Ps. 102).

201 Zimmerli, 107-108.

202 Zimmerli, 108.
edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin added discussions about the intermediate state, and “unio Christi” referring to Bernard, among others which confirm the point about reading *Psychopannychia* as a document from 1542.

In 1544, on a request of his colleague Guillaume Farel who was worried about the Anabaptist influence in the town of Neuchâtel, Calvin wrote a small treatise, namely, *Briève instructon pour armer tous bons fidèles contre les erreurs de la secte commune des anabaptistes*. And he supplemented it with a kind of summary of his former published *Psychopannychia*, again, by Farel’s request. Interestingly, there are some differences from the 1542 version of *Psychopannychia*. For examples, such expressions as ‘God the spirit’ or ‘God is spirit’ are dropped, while the expression ‘union with Christ’ appears...
beside ‘union with God.’ In other words, it might be said that the 1544 version of *Psychopannychia* seems like less philosophical than theological view of soul.

In 1545, besides the revised *Institutes, Genevan Catechism*, and the new edition of *Psychopannychia* itself, Calvin further demonstrated his view, particularly that of resurrection, in the treatise of *Contre la secte phantastique et furieuse des libertins, qui se nomment spirituelz* arguing against the Libertines who insist that the resurrection of the dead has already occurred.

4.6. Some Characteristics of Calvin’s View of Soul after Death in *Psychopannychia*

1. *Psychopannychia* can be located in the group of writings of the Reformed camp.

   It seems to me quite obvious that Calvin’s way of refuting the doctrine of “soul-sleep” is very similar to that of Zurich Reformers. Whether or not there is anti-Roman notion in the treatise can not be a decisive reason to pull it back to pre-conversion.

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211 Ex. CO 7:124-125.

212 Morii, “Young Calvin’s thought,” 27. Is this simply because of the French version, in which he possibly intended to be less scholarly than popular and readable discussion? Calvin also seems to emphasize Bernard’s sermon in it. See Tylenda, “Calvin and the Avignon Sermons of John XXII,” 46, n.40.

213 See, n.2.


215 Cf., for instance, his use of biblical references and his rhetoric for argument with those of Bullinger and Zwingli.

216 See, n.17.
because Zurich Reformers do not include either any polemic against Papists as long as the topic of soul-sleep is concerned.\textsuperscript{217}

2. \textit{Psychopannychia} is one of the best polemical works against the soul-sleep view, based firmly on the Scriptures and the Fathers

Although Calvin starts his writing with a sort of philosophical argument, most of his disputation consists of biblical exegesis.\textsuperscript{218} His hermeneutics in \textit{Psychopannychia} may be still immature, that is, more traditional in style and even allegorical at times.\textsuperscript{219} Nonetheless, we never miss his enthusiasm to establish a doctrine definitely by the words of God.

It is also observable that Calvin as a trained humanist probably read and utilized firsthand sources of the ancient Fathers, though possibility of his use of any intermediate sources should not be discarded.\textsuperscript{220} Calvin in this period must have submerged more

\textsuperscript{217} In fact, according to Raynal, Calvin proposed in his treatise the third way, as it were, between the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory and its penitential theology, and the eschatology of the radical reformers characterized in their literal reading of the Scriptures and their apocalypticism, which naturally emphasized the immanence of the last day, and their idealism for the restitution of the church. See, Raynal, “John Calvin’s Teaching about Eternal Life,” 78. Burns, on the other hand, is in the opinion that Calvin’s view of the intermediate state can not reject Roman abuses of purgatory and invocation of saints. See, \textit{Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton} (1972), 27. However, Burns overlooks Calvin’s strongly christological defense for the happiness of the soul.

\textsuperscript{218} We should also be aware of the fact that he employs here and there in the treatise apocryphal and even dubious books in their authority.

\textsuperscript{219} Mostly in the cases for refutation against the literal reading of the biblical image of death as sleep by the opponents.

\textsuperscript{220} Cf. Lane, \textit{Student of the Church Fathers}, 7-8, and 201.
deeply in reading the ancient Fathers, Augustine in particular, than medieval writers. Thus, he seems to know little about Pope John XXII, for example, at the time of publication.

3. Calvin’s view of the departed soul in *Psychopannychia* is very much Augustinian but more biblically and teleologically oriented

   *Psychopannychia*, the teaching of the immortality of soul is closely connected with the doctrine of resurrection. This is because the immortality of soul is virtually equivalent for Calvin to the eternal life or union with Christ. Like Bullinger, Calvin also insists that all the believers can experience the peaceful rest or life with Christ after death, looking at their future reward from a distance. That reward is nothing but the blessed resurrection. In other words, it is that union with Christ that will surely bring the souls of believers to their blessed resurrection.

   One of the characteristics of Calvin’s view of the departed soul is the idea of progress. Quite similar to the view of Augustine and Pope John XXII, Calvin asserts

   A significant exception is Bernard. Calvin emphasizes Bernard’s sermon in *Psychopannychia* particularly after its 1545 edition or *Briève instruction* in 1544. See, Zimmerli, 84, n.a and n.2; Tylenda, “Calvin and the Avignon Sermons,” 46, n.40.

   Tylenda, “Calvin and the Avignon Sermons,” 45. Although *OS* editors refer to two works by which Calvin probably has acquired knowledge about medieval churches, they do not touch this issue further (OS5:vii).

   We should recall that Calvin has treated both articles of “the resurrection of the body” and “the eternal life” in the Creed together in his 1537 *Instruction* and the 1539 *Institutes*.

   Oberman, “The Pursuit of Happiness,” 267, n.50: “Not Plato, but Augustine proves to be the guiding authority behind assumptions, terminology, and a *catena* of biblical references in the *Psychopannychia*. It is a characteristic of this first treatise that Calvin is not only an avid reader, but also a “recipient” of Augustine, without the later critical independence.” Cf. Augustine, *De quantitate animae* XVI:29-30; *De Genesi ad litteram* (esp. its final sections). As far as biblical reference is concerned, however,
that the final perfection of soul will occur only at the day of resurrection toward which the believer’s soul does not cease its progress. Different from them, however, he also insists of the significance of “awake-ness” or conversion of soul, necessary not only for the present happiness of the believers but for the “beatific glory” as well. Thus, believer’s happiness which has already begun will be perfected at the end. It is no doubt that this teleological tendency in Calvin is based primarily and firmly upon the teachings of the Scripture itself.

Secondly, it seems also significant to me that Calvin’s teleological view is based upon his understanding of the believer’s relation to God. According to Calvin, it is only through the Gospel that believers can see God not as their judge but as their father.

there is no reference in Augustine’s catena to “the third heaven” of 2 Cor. 12, one of which are most important texts for Calvin. Tavard, on the other hand, repeatedly points out the more direct influence of Bonaventure than Augustine, or Bonaventurian version of Augustine, especially in his view of the nature of the kingdom of God (“union with God,” “one with God,” or “filled with God,” etc.). See, Tavard, 91, 97, 110, 171f. Cf. “Neo-Platonic mysticism through Augustine” in Morii, “Young Calvin’s thought,” 22.


226 Cf. Oberman, “Initia Calvini,” 33: “The positions of Pope John and John Calvin seem quite similar when compared with the extreme alternatives of mortality and immediate full beatific vision. There is one crucial difference, however, in that Pope John articulates the ‘not yet’ dimension of the intermediate stage in relation to the resurrection, where as Calvin places an equal emphasis on the ‘already.’ Calvin’s theme is the progress of the Christian in three stages, from conversion (awakening), resting after death yet fully awake in the joyous expectation of the full beatitude, which will finally be received on the day of the resurrection. The progress of the pilgrim ‘in dies magis magisque’ is already the mark of the earliest thought of Calvin.” See, OS 1:132. Cf. Articuli a facultate sacrae theologiae Parisiensis determinati super materiis fidei nostrae hodie controversiae. Cum antidoto (1544), Art. XVII (De purgatorio, CO7:28). According to George, the idea of soul-sleep occurs when the resurrection is viewed as an anticlimactic event at the end; Calvin instead states incompleteness of the beatific vision prior to the resurrection and thus “the progress of soul” following Augustine, though carefully avoiding the doctrine of purgatory. See, George, “Another Look,” 102 and 111.

227 To the exactly same question of “what need is there of the resurrection if we are happy before the resurrection” which Augustine answered only ambiguously in his De Genesi ad litteram, XII:35 (68), Calvin convincingly replied with the words of Apostle Paul in the chapter 15 of the first Corinthian (Zimmerli, 86-88).

228 Zimmerli, 42.
Therefore, what makes *visio dei* truly “beatific” is this goodness and mildness of God. In other words, the perfection of soul or the so-called beatific vision of God in Calvin’s understanding is not only the issue of perception, but essentially the issue of personal relation to God. This may be also the reason why the progress of the soul or the growth of believer is so important for Calvin.

\[229\] Cf., for instance, with Thomas Aquinas’s view on the subject. See, above, 4.2.2.
Six years after Calvin published his first biblical commentary on the book of
Romans, a new commentary appeared. It is Commentarii in priorem Epistolam Pauli ad
Corinthios,¹ which became at the same time the first of many subsequent commentaries and
lectures on virtually the whole Scripture.²

Examining chronologically this series of biblical commentaries of the New Testament
books and two early Old Testament commentaries (Genesis and Psalms), though only texts
noteworthy for our study, we will explore in this chapter what Calvin discusses about on

¹ CO 49:293-574. See, T. H. L. Parker, Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries, 2nd ed. (Louisville,

² The chronological order of publication of Calvin’s biblical commentaries and lectures (L) is as
follows:
1540 Romans
1546 1 Corinthians
1548 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossian, 1 & 2 Timothy
1549 Hebrews
1550 Titus, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, James
1551 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John, Jude, Isaiah
1552 Acts
1553 John
1554 Genesis
1555 Synoptic Gospels
1557 Psalms / L. Hosea
1559 L. Minor Prophets
1561 L. Daniel
1563 Exodus-Deuteronomy / L. Jeremiah, Lamentations
1564 Joshua
1565 L. Ezekiel
our subject more exegetically than he did in the previous Institutes, and more extensively than in his Psychopannychia.

5.1. *1 Corinthians*: 1546

5.1.1. *1 Corinthians* 3:12-15 (on Purgatory)

Calvin has already given his basic refutation to the doctrine of purgatory in his first Institutes,3 though in its second edition4 Calvin added discussions on some alleged texts from the Gospels (Matt.12:32-Mark 3:28-29-Luke 12:10 and Matt. 5:25-26) and other books (Phil.2:10, Rev.5:13, 2 Macc.12:435), as well as 1 Corinthians chapter 3 (vv.12-15).6 In the discussion of the 1539 Institutes on a figure of “fire” in the Corinthians text, Calvin exhibited both interpretations of the Papists who consider it as nothing but the fire of purgatory, and of the ancient writers for whom it signifies tribulation or the cross. Calvin agrees with neither side. He, then, describes his own views on the figures of the metaphorical passage as follows: “wood, hay, and stubble” = “the doctrines forged by human minds”; “fire” = “the testing by the Holy Spirit”; and “those saved through that fire” = “builders of the church” who build it with such an unsuitable doctrine as that of purgatory.

3 Cf. ch.2, n.44 (OS 1:200).

4 Regarding the expansion of Calvin’s argument in the 1543 and 1559 Institutes, see OS 4:138-146.

5 Calvin just ignored this passage in the 1539 Institutes because he did not regard it as a canonical book. In its 1543 and 1559 editions, however, he added some discussions of the canonicity of the Maccabees, referring to Augustine, Jerome, and (Pseudo-) Cyprian (OS IV:140-141).

6 CO 1:733-735 (III.v.6-9). Cf. Erasmus, among other exegetes, had already denied in his Annotations that the text is a proof for the doctrine of purgatory.
Calvin also connects the fire-like test of the Spirit to “the Day of the Lord” (v.13) because it is the moment God reveals his magnificent presence like “fire” to human beings.

Likewise, in his commentaries on the same text, Calvin appears so sure about the clarity of the text that he explains straightforwardly what he thinks right on it. According to Calvin, the whole metaphor should be understood in terms of a comparison between Paul and other ministers: “gold, silver, and precious stones” = “doctrine worthy of Christ” and “wood, stubble, and hay” = “doctrine not conformed to the foundation [= Christ], fabricated in human brain” (v.12).

In regard to “the day of the Lord” (v.13), Calvin discusses first its textual problem because the words “of the Lord” do not appear in the Greek text and might have been added by someone in the old translation. Nonetheless, since the brightness of “day” brings everything into light and dispels darkness and obscurity, and that day must not be human but divine, the meaning of “the day” is virtually same as the day “of the Lord.” Calvin then demonstrates another aspect of “day” by relating it to “fire” in the same verse. Because it is quite obvious for Calvin that the “fire” signifies “the spirit of the Lord” who

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7 CO 49:355-357.

8 Calvin is right when he states that there is a large agreement on the interpretation of the metaphor. In fact, Calvin seems to be in the large company of exegetes including Clement of Alexandria, Ambrosiaster, Nicholas of Lyra, Thomas Aquinas, Cajetan, Erasmus, Luther, and Beza who consider the metaphor as a reference to teaching, whether true or false, rather than morality. And yet, there are also some significant exegetes, including Origen, Augustine, Jerome, and Chrysostom, who take the latter position. For the overview of various interpretations on the Corinthian texts, it is useful to consult with Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer’s Critical and Exegetical Hand-book to the Epistles to the Corinthians, E.T.(1884).

9 See, for example, the Greek text by Erasmus’ Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine.

tests doctrines, the metaphor of “fire” is thus an allusion to “day” whose fiery flame tests everything. Again, in another reference to “fire” in verse 15, Calvin steadily maintains his interpretation of “fire” as “the test of the Spirit” though he knows that some interpreters take “fire” as the cross or afflictions for God purges at times his people through afflictions, reflecting a strongly eschatological reading of the events of his own times.

Now, after finishing the exegesis of the passage, Calvin is ready to discuss the Papists’ doctrine of purgatory itself. Although he raises several questions on the doctrine, they appear too silly for him to answer seriously. Hence, in contrast of Calvin's clear and straight exposition of the text, his argument against the doctrine of purgatory in the commentary seems not as persuasive as in his Institutes. He simply demonstrated that the given text cannot be a proof for the doctrine. He neither mentions anything about the last day of the Lord here. In other words, Calvin’s treatment of the text here is more restrained than in the Institutes.

5.1.2. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 (on knowledge of God, imperfect/perfect)

Calvin referred to this passage in the discussion of the relationship between faith, hope, and love in the first edition of the Institutes defending the doctrine of justification by faith rather than by love. He expanded that portion more fully and took it into the 1539

11 CO 49:357.


13 OS 1:95.
Institutes.\textsuperscript{14} In the commentary,\textsuperscript{15} on the other hand, Calvin not only contextualizes the passage and discusses it precisely in terms of the present-future dynamics, but also deals with some curious teachings about afterlife.

Contrary to the simple meaning of the text ("love never faileth") which tells of the excellence of love, it is the Papists, according to Calvin, who distorted the passage to establish a teaching that the souls of departed saints continue to pray for us because prayer is an office of love.\textsuperscript{16} In order not to get involved in that issue too much, he gives just a few refutations against it. First, the expression "love endures" does not necessarily mean that loving exercise would continue. For Calvin, as argued already in Psychopannychia, the departed saints are now delighted in "the calm rest." Secondly, no one can prove the persistent prayer by the dead saints. Calvin also raises many questions which the Papists might be unable to answer because their teaching is poorly supported by the passage itself.

Calvin rather examines another small, but not insignificant, phrase ("whether knowledge, it will be destroyed"). The question is "whether those who in this world excel either in learning or in other gifts, will be in degree with idiots in the kingdom of God?"\textsuperscript{17}

Having admonished readers not to investigate what we shall be in the kingdom because the Lord has kept us from such curiosity by silence, Calvin attempts to answer the question

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} CO 1:798-799 (III.xviii.8).
\item \textsuperscript{15} CO 49:511-516.
\item \textsuperscript{16} CO 49:512. Cf. Chrysostom, Hom. 1 Cor., 33:5 (1 Cor. 13:8); "Si enim oderis, quomodo errantem facile convertes? quomodo orabis pro infidel?" (PG 61:282). I have used the Latin translation for convenience.
\item \textsuperscript{17} CO 49:512. Cf. Chrysostom, Hom. 1 Cor., 34:2 (1 Cor. 13:8); "Sive scientia destructur. Quid ergo? In ignorantia tunc victuri sumus? Absit: nam tunc maxime augenda scientia est" (PG 61:287).
\end{itemize}
very carefully by way of conjecture based on the text. In his view, since learning and the like are subservient to the necessity of this life, few of them remain after it though the learned will maintain no loss from the want of them but rather the fruit of them.

Likewise, in Calvin's judgment, many exegetes are wrong in their interpretation of verse 9 (“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part”). They understood it mistakenly as if it meant that our knowledge itself was growing daily for it was imperfect in this world. For Calvin, what is imperfect is not our knowledge but our status.\(^{18}\) In fact, knowledge and prophecy are helpful gifts to understand and to grow in this earthly life. But the point, which Paul attempts to make, is rather that those gifts are temporary and useful only for a while as long as we make progress by them in accordance with their purpose.\(^{19}\) The question, now, is when all the gifts will come to the end and thus we will reach the perfection (v.10). Calvin maintains that it starts at the moment of death when we take off all the imperfections and our bodies, yet will not be completed until “the day of judgment.”\(^{20}\)

In the comments on verse 12 (“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face”), Calvin discusses the whole issue more extensively. With regard to a similitude of “speculum” and its obscurity, he takes it as a means for the ministry of the word.\(^{21}\) For him, the preaching ministry, as well as sacraments and other aids in the service,

\(^{18}\) Cf. CO 1:460 (III.i.20).

\(^{19}\) Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. 1 Cor.*, 34:2 (1 Cor. 13:9-10); “Non ergo scientia destruitur, sed illa ex parte tantum scientia: non enim solum tot tantaque sciemus, sed etiam multo plura” (PG 61:287).


\(^{21}\) For the simile of “glass,” cf. *Inst* (1559), I.vi.1 and xiv.1.
is like a looking-glass because angelic beings who enjoy the clear vision of God do not need any of those helps. But this does not necessarily mean that the earthly vision is suspicious or untrustworthy, but that it is different from the vision which will be given in the last day. As Paul teaches elsewhere, we have to see God not by sight but by faith in this world (2 Cor. 5:7), but in the world to come we will see Him face to face. Therefore, our given knowledge of God by the word is trustworthy and true, and yet it is called “obscure” only in comparative sense.

Even though Calvin considers the adverb “then (tunc)” as the last day or “the day of Christ,” and thus the perfect vision is postponed until the day, he notices that we will begin to enjoy a certain vision of God after our souls get departed from their body and need no more aids of the ministry. Nonetheless, Paul does not describe here the state of afterlife comprehensively because, Calvin supposes, it is no use for piety.

As we have seen, we can well recognize here Calvin's basic views on the knowledge of God, the ecclesiastical ministries, and the vision of God in this life and after. It might not be an oversimplification to put them in the schema of good-better-best. Interestingly and significantly, Calvin gives no reference in these discussions to the sinful nature of human being but only "our imperfection"(v.9). In fact, it is not always clear what he exactly means when he states that "we are not yet perfect" (v.9) or that “the measure of our present knowledge is imperfect” (v.12). For Calvin, knowledge, the ministry of word, and sacraments are necessary because we neither are like angels who can closely look at God, nor we live in heaven yet but in this created world. However, about how much Calvin

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22 Cf. Calvin, Psychopannychia (Zimmerli, 45).
thinks our knowledge is imperfect, we are not informed. This Calvin's ambiguity reminds us of his discussion of the divine knowledge through creation in the commentaries on *Romans* chapter 1\(^{23}\).

5.1.3. *1 Corinthians 15*

This whole chapter is, of course, a great text for our subject, the resurrection of the body, and is full of interests in Calvin’s exegesis. Although he has already referred to various passages of the chapter in his earlier editions of the *Institutes*, catechisms, and *Psychopannychia*, he has not explored the text itself in such depth as we shall see here.

a. *1 Corinthians 15:12-19*

As Calvin has discussed in his *Institutes*\(^{24}\) and *Psychopannychia*,\(^{25}\) even if some philosophers teach the immortality of soul, they never think about the resurrection of the body. Following Paul's line of argument, Calvin counters those who, following the Sadducees' error, foolishly cast away the hope of future resurrection. The exegesis has contemporary reference since, in Calvin's view, the Libertines made the same error as the Corinthians.\(^{26}\) As Paul had argued, Christ's resurrection provides the basis for belief in the general resurrection of the dead (v.13).\(^{27}\)


\(^{24}\) See, especially CO 1:680-681.

\(^{25}\) See, especially *Zimmerli*, 45.

\(^{26}\) See, CO 49:536-537.
In his exegesis on verse 18 ("[if Christ be not raised,] then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished"), Calvin states that "because the departed have never perished as long as their souls live even without their bodies.” Refuting "some fanatics" who believe there is no life in the intermediate period between death and resurrection, Calvin further maintains that "although the souls of the dead are now living and enjoying blessed rest, yet the whole of their felicity and consolation depends solely on the resurrection." It is the day when they finally possess the kingdom of God for which they thus eagerly hope.

The next verse (v.19: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”) should not be taken either as an excuse to the soul-sleepers who argue that Paul would not have said that Christians have hope only in this life if there remained any happiness for the soul after life. Calvin, on the contrary, insists that Paul’s intention is that the Christian hope is nothing like a myth but the last day of judgment. In other words, Christians who eagerly desire the future life despite their present afflictions through the cross would be most miserable people if they have only the earthly hope.

Obviously Calvin's argument on this passage appears very much like that in his Psychopannychia. Although the text seems not necessarily appropriate, if not impossible,
for the defense of the immortality of soul, Calvin's assurance of the resurrection of Christ as
the foundation of ours is strongly demonstrated.

b. 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Calvin is aware of that Paul’s comparative argument of Adam with Christ (vv.21-22) is similar to that in Romans chapter 5. Since Paul regards here the resurrection of the body as “the fruit of spiritual life,” Calvin carries his discussion forward only with the resurrection of the believers. In Calvin’s understanding, Christ’s resurrection is called “the first fruits” (v.20) because the rest will follow it when he comes for judgment.

The passage vv.24-28 has been much debated through all ages in the history of exegesis. It is a debate particularly around the doctrine of trinity and the distinction between humanity and deity of Christ.

For Calvin, the last day is “the goal of our course—a quiet harbor—a condition that will no longer be exposed to changes.” It is also the time when Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God and abolish “all rule and all authority and power (v.24).” On the meaning of the phrase “all rule and all authority and power,” some exegetes mistakenly, in

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32 Chrysostom comments the sentence (“in Christ shall all be made alive”) in his homily, saying that it means “bodily but not spiritually” and applies it to all human beings. Cf. *Hom. 1 Cor.*, 39:3 (PG 61:336). Luther, on the other hand, asserts in his commentary on 1 Cor. 15:22, “S. Paulus redet hie noch nicht mehr denn von denen, die da christen sind” (WA 36:553).


35 Cf. above, 4.3.2., n.104.
Calvin’s judgment, identify it with “all enemies” in the next verse. Calvin takes it instead as all lawful, yet earthly or temporary, powers that sustain our present life. These are powers which Paul mentioned elsewhere (Rom.13:1), and which the Prophets described as “sun and moon” to be darkened in the day of the Lord (Isa.13:10, Ezek.32:7). The prophecy has been partially fulfilled through the reign of Christ but will be fully completed in the last day when the glory of God alone shine forth.

Calvin then applies the teaching to the world of his time illustrating what would happen on the day. In Calvin’s view, there will be no social system (government, magistracy, laws, etc.), no social distinction (servant and master, king and peasant, magistrate and citizen, etc.), no angelic principality in heaven, and no ecclesiastical power (bishops, teachers, prophets, etc.) in the church, because God will rule all by himself. The righteous will shine their light.

On a phrase "he hath put all things under his feet" (v.27) which may be a quote from Psalm 8:6, though it may be a reflection of Paul on the nature of Christ's kingdom, Calvin deals with two difficulties to apply the psalm to the present context: first, the psalmist or "the prophet" seems not to speak of Christ but of the whole human being; and secondly, "all things" appear to signify only creatures which are convenient for our bodily

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38 Cf. Luther, *Comm.* 1 Cor. 15:24, “das bis weltlich leben sol auffhoren mit alle seinem jamer und unglück und der leidige Teuffel mit seinem regiment, ja dazu auch alle beide, weltlich und geistlich ament” (WA 36:568).

39 Cf. Luther, *Comm.* 1 Cor. 15:24, “den jenes leben wird nicht so geordnet sein wie das zeitliche, das da müsse sein man und weib, kind, haus, hoff, knecht und megde und, was megr zum Ehestand gehoret odder aus dem selben kompt, Oberkeit, unterthane und, was mehr fur stende und empter auff erden sind” (WA 36:568).
life. On the contrary to the first difficulty, Calvin argues that because Christ is called "the first born of every creature" (Col.1:15) and "heir of all things" (Heb.1:2), and also because the fallen creation can never be recovered but by Christ, the psalm can be naturally and appropriately applied to Christ by whom we will become God's heirs. And for the second, Calvin extends his argument a little farther. Although it is true that the psalmist considers "all things" as many living creatures, what suitably correspond to Christ's reign are not only those creatures but also all things both visible and invisible.\(^{40}\)

Based on these interpretations, Calvin now draws two simple conclusions from the whole passage: that the time of final judgment when God the Father will fully rule has not come yet, and that Christ is the mediator who will finally conquer all the enemies and fulfill the kingdom of God by putting us and all things, as well as himself, into subjection to God.

This might look inconsistent, Calvin states, with other passages (Dan.7:14, 27; Luke1:33; 2 Pet.1:11) teaching "the eternity of Christ's kingdom." However, he believes that to solve this question will make it even better to understand what Paul meant. In Calvin’s view, it is important to acknowledge, first, that it was pleased with God the Father to give all the powers to Christ and exalt his name even if such an honor does not fit his human nature. Secondly, that Christ has become Lord and King as if he were the agent of his Father though not in a way of employee-employer relationship because Christ himself is nothing but God.\(^{41}\) Then, why does the Scripture still describe the exalted Christ as the ruler? It is because, Calvin asserts, we may not look around any other authorities but fix all

\(^{40}\) Calvin repeats the similar argument in his commentary on the said psalm in 1557.

\(^{41}\) Cf. Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III, q.20, art.1 (Whether we may say that Christ is subject to the Father?).
our thoughts on him alone. In other words, we could recognize God’s dominion "in the face of the man Christ."

As for the restoration of his kingdom and its delivery to the Father, it will not take place in the way that he will surrender it but "transfer it in a manner from his humanity to his glorious divinity" because the veil of our current weakness will be removed. Therefore, in Calvin’s understanding, the phrase (Christ will "be subjected to God") means that "we shall behold God reigning in his majesty, and Christ’s humanity will then no longer be interposed to keep us back from a closer view of God."  

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42 Hilary (De trinitate 11:39) and Ambrose (De fide, V:12[149]), as well as Jerome and Augustine, understand “kingdom” as believers or the elect.

43 Chrysostom, in his homily, takes “to deliver (παραδοθηναι) ” in the meaning of “to make straight (κατορθουν) ”.

44 There are diverse interpretations on the verse. Calvin’s view “from humanity to divinity” sounds like Hilary’s (De trinitate, 11:40) and Jerome’s (Letter, 55:5) rather than Ambrose’s “from the Son of Man to the Son of God” or Augustine’s “from believing to seeing” (De trinitate, 1:8[10]). Luther put the same in the schema of two kingdoms, namely, “from kingdom of faith to kingdom of clarity” (Comm. 1 Cor. 15:24), or “kingdom of grace to kingdom of glory” for Melanchthon (Anno., 1 Cor 15:24). This “two kingdoms” exegesis on the text comes probably from Chrysostom (Hom. 1 Cor., 39:6/P.G 61:341) who speaks of kingdom by creation and kingdom by appropriation or special ownership of the faithful, the latter of which Christ shall deliver up to the Father. According to Muller (Richard A. Muller, “Christ in the Eschaton: Calvin and Moltmann on the Duration of the Munus Regium,” Harvard Theological Review 74 [1981]:1), the text does not conflict at all, for Calvin, with other texts referring the eternity of Christ’s kingship, and yet “he leaves us with a series of loose ends, systematic suggestions or tendencies, with what Hermann Bauke called a complexio oppositorum” (ibid., 33) rather than completing the argument. Muller further suggests that Calvin’s view of the changes noted on 1 Cor. 15:28 are “epistemological, not ontological” (ibid., 37). In fact, Calvin himself added more careful discussions on the issue to his final edition of the Institutes (cf. Inst. I.xiii.26 and II.xiv.3), indicating that it is not about Christ’s two natures but his office which will be discharged at the last time.

45 Cf. Luther, Comm. 1 Cor15:24, “das meinen S. Paulus, als er spricht, das Christus das Reich Gotte dem Vater uberantworten wird, Das ist, Er wird den glauben und das verborgen wesen behseit thun und die seinen darstellen fur Gott, dem Vater, und uns also offenberlich seffen inn das Reich, das er angerichtet hat und ist teglich treibet, das wir in sehen werden on deckel und tunckel wort auffs aller klerest” (WA 36:570). Cf. also, Calvin, Comm. Amos 9:11 and Inst. II.xv.5.

46 The Son subjected to God is Christ in his humanity for Augustine (De trinitate, 1:8) and Jerome (Dialogus adversus Pelagianos. Pelag, 1:18), while others identify Christ with his church of the elect. Cf. n.44. Melanchthon points out that Christ’s willingness for the subjection indicates the absolute sovereignty of God (Anno., 1 Cor. 15:24).
On the statement "God may be all in all" (v.28), Calvin suggests two possible interpretations. First, even though wicked people and the Devil or even legitimate powers in the present world prevent us from seeing obviously that "God is all in all," we will see it directly when Christ comes to judge. Another interpretation, which Calvin seems to prefer, is to take the phrase as a reference particularly to believers who already belong to God but will be fully and truly God’s in the end.47

Calvin further refutes misinterpretations. Some think that, since God will be all in all, anything else will disappear. Calvin insists that the text should not be understood in that way, but that God will rather bring back all things to oneself. If so, then others imagine that even the Devil and the wicked should be included in that “all things.”48 To this blasphemous notion, Calvin gives no serious comment.

c. 1 Corinthians 15:35-50

(v.35): Calvin states at the outset of this section that: “There is nothing that is more averse to human reason than this article of faith.” It is only God who could convince us that our corruptible bodies will be not only raised but also changed into the glorious ones, even if they are rotted, burn out, or torn apart.49 The question raised here, Calvin asserts, is not about the mode of the resurrection per se but its impossibility, and to such question we

47 This ‘unio’ is emphasized in Calvin’s Psychopannychia (Zimmerli, 78).

48 This may be an Origenian and Platonistic doctrine of the ‘apokatastasis.’

49 Cf. Calvin, Inst (1536): “Credimus carnis resurrectionem, hoc est: futurum, ut omnia hominum corruptione in incorruptionem, ex mortalitate in immortalitatem, semel suscitentur (1 Cor.15.1 Thess.4. Acts 23); atque hi quidem, qui ante a vita defuncti fuerint, carmem suam recipient, sive a vermis corrosa fuerit, sive in terra putruerit, sive in cineres redacta, sive alio quovis modo dissipata” (OS 1:93).
have to trust in God’s awesome power even if it is incomprehensible.50

(v.41ff.): According to Calvin, some misapply Paul’s argument of the diversity of glory in celestial bodies to the saints.51 Calvin admits that it is true and scriptural that “after the resurrection, there will be the diverse degrees of honor and glory among the saints.” This is not the point, however, of Paul’s discussion here. In Calvin’s understanding, Paul simply compares the present condition of body with the future one by way of illustrations of nature. Hence, the seedtime and the harvest correspond to the present life, which is subjected to mortality and humiliation,52 and the glorious and incorruptible resurrection respectively (v.43). Paul then talks about another set of comparisons specifically in terms of quality of the body both present and future. Based on Pauline terminology, Calvin contrasts ‘corpus animale’ with ‘corpus spirituale.’ The former is called ‘animale’ because it is made alive by ‘anima’; the latter is called ‘spirituale’ because it is alive by ‘spiritus.’ Thus, the difference of qualities of the two may be simply stated as ‘animation’ and ‘inspiration.’ For Calvin, it is obvious that the quality of inspiration is much more complete than that of animation because the latter needs many natural aids while the former

50 Cf. Calvin, Comm. 1 Cor. 6:14. Calvin clearly states this in his final edition of the Institutes as one of the foundations of the resurrection belief. See, later discussion.

51 Tertullian applies the differences of glory or honor in flesh to servants of God, the heathen, and martyrs, though he states that this is not the difference of substance of the resurrected body (De resurrectione carnis, 52. Cf. Scorpiace, 6). Luther, in his sermon, also mentions differences of glory between, for example, apostle, martyr, bishop, and the like, while he insists that they all have the same essence and thus have equal joy and bliss in God (LW, E.T., 185). Chrysostom argues about differences not only between the righteous and the sinners, the celestial and the terrestrial, but also between the celestial people themselves, especially in terms of “reward” (Hom. 1 Cor. 15:40-41). Origen seems to apply the differences of heavenly bodies to those of heavenly saints (De principis II.x.2. Contra Celsum, passim), though it is not clear enough.

52 Cf. Chrysostom’s exegesis taking the illustration of sowing as the burial of our dead bodies (Hom. 1 Cor. 15:43-44).
Calvin insistently admonishes readers not to go farther for "airy speculations" of those who sustain by philosophizing that "the substance of the body" will be spiritual with no change. Calvin also refers in his exegesis on v.47 to the perverted interpretation of the Manichees, as well as other misinterpretations for refutation. Calvin's point seems to be that Paul simply states here the condition or quality, not substance, of bodies of Adam (earthly) and Christ (heavenly), and that any refinement more than that goes wrong.

(v.49): Despite a textual problem, the meaning of the text is quite apparent for Calvin. Believers begin their Christian lives with bearing the image of Christ, which gives them spiritual regeneration, and then go through the transformation process in this world until they finally attain the perfect restoration of soul and body for which we still hope.

Calvin takes the next verse, which is also debatable, in the context of the foregoing

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53 Cf. Melanchthon, “anima significt naturalem vitam, naturales motus, et vires omnes in universum. Ita hic vocat corpus animale corpus, quod naturaliter vegetatur…” and “Spiritus significt, quidquid spiratu dei vegetatur et spiritualibus motionibus et affectibus trahitur. Corpus est instumentum intrasque: Corpus animae vel spiritus instrumentum” (Anna., 1 Cor.15:45). Cf. For Luther, a spiritual body “sein leben sol haben und doch nicht mehr ein essender, schlaffender, dewender leib sein wird, sondern geistlich von Gott gespeiset und erhalten werden und das leben gar an im haben” (WA 36:660).

54 Calvin refutes those who imagine, besides other speculations, that the substance of the body will be spiritual. This may refer to such an exegete as Chrysostom who comments on the verse that “hoc [this body] autem none est spirituale? Spirituale quidem, sed illud [the future body] multo magis” and that “[the spiritual body] futurum sit levius et subtilius, et quod posit etiam vehi in aere” (Hom. 1 Cor., 41:5/PG 61:359).

55 According to Altermath, as far as early church fathers are concerned, fathers in West tend to insist the continuity of body physical and spiritual while those in East the discontinuity or transformation (François Altermath, Du corps psychique au corps spirituel: Interprétation de l Cor. 15, 35-49 par les auteurs chrétiens des quatre premiers siècles [Tübingen, 1977], 244-247).

56 Cf. Calvin’s discussion in Psychopannychia (Zimmerli, 60-61). According to Luther, the distinction between earth and heaven should not be understood “von der sunde des ersten menschen Adam…noch von der gerechtigkeit, so Christus hat,” “sondern allein von dem natürlichen und geistlichen leben des leibs” (WA 36:670).

57 Calvin mentions that some have thought that here is an exhortation to a godly life because of a textual difference. Cf. Chrysostom, Hom. 1 Cor., 42:1 (PG 61:363). Moreover, Calvin also seems to have avoided an ethical understanding behind, which would distort Paul’s meaning. Cf. again, Chrysostom, “Propterea enim effecti sumus terreni, quoniam mala facimus : non quoniam ab initio effecti sumus terreni, sed quoniam peccavimus” (Hom. 1 Cor., 42:1/PAG 61:363).
discussion. In other words, they will not be accepted with our corruptible bodies into the incorruptible kingdom of God, or “the kingdom of Christ” Calvin also calls, unless they are renewed by the Spirit of Christ.  

Calvin starts with a discussion of textual differences among three Latin versions, one of which he prefers (We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed) by considering the context. Then, he argues that the text here deals absolutely with the elect because they all, whether or not still alive at the time of resurrection, must be changed or renewed to enter the kingdom of God. As for a difficulty to harmonize the statement with the notion that all human beings are supposed to die, Calvin explains that the “change” means a kind of death. Although it is not an ordinary death, it can be called death as long as it destructs the corruptible nature of the body. Moreover, this is not inconsistent with the text (“we shall not all sleep”) unless the soul will be apart from the body. For Calvin, it is “a sudden transition from corruptible nature into a blessed immortality.”

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58 Here again, Calvin shows his unique view of body. Cf. Chrysostom, “Carnem enim hic vocat mala opera” (Hom. 1 Cor., 42:1/PG 61:364) with Irenaeus’ more careful understanding against Gnostics of not repudiating the flesh itself but necessity of infusion of the Spirit into it (Adversus haereses, V:x:2). See, Mark Jeffrey Olson, Irenaeus, The Valentinian Gnostics, and the Kingdom of God (A.H. Book V): The Debate about 1 Corinthians 15:50 (Mellen Biblical Press, 1922). Luther still shows another idea that flesh and blood will be raised but can’t inherit ‘Kingdom’ (WA 36:672-673).


60 Cf. Colet, “Immutabuntur in melius et in formam Christi soli very Christiani” (Colet’s Comm. 1 Cor.), 278.

61 Cf. Chrysostom, “sed oportet illa quoque corpora quae non moriuntur, immutatet transire ad incorruptionem” (Hom. 1 Cor., 42:1/PG 61:364).

62 Cf. Calvin’s discussion on the resurrection in the first Institutes (OS 1:93).
(v.52): The change will be all sudden, Calvin continues, because Christ will come as suddenly as "twinkling." A word "trumpet" should be taken as a metaphor in his understanding. Referring to another Pauline passage (1 Thess.4:16) in which the "voice of the archangel" and the "trumpet of God" are connected, Calvin considers the trumpet as a representation of Christ’s proclamation by which all the dead will be gathered from all over the world, just as an army is summoned to battle by a commander with the sound of a trumpet.

Then, Calvin depicts a grand picture of the last day. Different from the time of Moses, not one people but all the people, both living and dead, will be called to the court of God. Moreover, Christ's command must reach even dry bones and dust so that they will retrieve their former look, be reunited to their spirits to be revived, and proceed to the presence of Christ.

Calvin pays a special attention to the fact that Paul seems to count himself in the number of those who will survive at the time of resurrection when he says that "we" shall be changed. For Calvin, it is quite sure that the saints including Paul eagerly desired for "that day" (2 Tim.1:18) all the time, and thus they have already lived in the "last times" (1 Jn. 2:18).

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63 Cf. Comm. 1 Thess. 4:16 where Calvin criticizes those who dispute this issue “with greater subtlety.” In fact, it is medieval Scholastics who have argued the role of “the trumpet,” as well as “the angel,” in the final resurrection. Cf. Peter Lombard, Sententiae in IV libris distinctae, IV, dist.XLIII, cap.2 (245), entitled “De voce tubae,” with Aquinas, Summa theologiae, suppl., q. 76, art. 2 and 3. One of the earliest references identifying the trumpet with the voice of Christ is Irenaeus'. Adversus haereses, V.13.1.

64 This general picture of the last judgment must be composed by various passages, including the vision of Ezekiel, of the Scriptures, but does not correspond to any specific text. Cf. Inst. II.xvi.17(b)

65 Chrysostom considers it in a different way: "Illud, Nos, non dicit de seipso, sed de iis qui tune inveniuntur viventes" (Hom. 1 Cor., 42:2/PG 61:364).
(v.53): As he has discussed above (v.41ff.), the verse approves his view of the resurrected body that it should be the same with which we presently live although it will be "honored with incorruption." So that there is no room for the erroneous view of the fanatics who think that human beings will receive new bodies.

(v.57f.): Death no longer has a power over us because of Christ. And all what has been fulfilled in the Head, that is Christ, should be fulfilled in its members, too. Hence, in spite of all our weakness that continues to torture us in this world, we are confident of our final triumph because “Christ’s victory is ours.” Since it is this hope of the resurrection, a better life or even a reward in heaven, that encourages believers and makes them steadfast in good works (Col.1:10), Calvin concludes that “if the hope of a resurrection is taken away, on the contrary, the foundation being rooted out, the whole structure of piety will be ruined.”

5.2. 2 Corinthians: 1547(F)/1548(L)\(^{66}\)

5.2.1. 2 Corinthians 4:16 (outward-inward man, earthly-heavenly)

In his understanding of the comparison of “outward man” and “inward man,” Calvin differs from other interpreters. While the latter, including Chrysostom,\(^{67}\) take the “outward man” specifically as a notion of a body, our reformer comprehends it as whatever is related to this earthly life. The real comparison here, for Calvin, is that of two kinds of


\(^{67}\) Chrysostom, Hom. 2 Cor., 9:2 (PG 61:461).
life, earthly and heavenly. As much as the present condition of life perishes, our meditation on a better life will be promoted, and thus our “inward man” may be strengthened as well.\textsuperscript{68}

5.2.2. 2 Corinthians 5:1ff.\textsuperscript{69}

According to Calvin, the whole discussion on the text consists of the miserable condition in the earthly life and the glory of the future life. Although it is not quite clear for Calvin what a “building of perpetual duration” means, he preferably understands it in the way that a blessed condition of the soul’s immortality after death is the beginning of that “building” while the glorious resurrected body is its accomplishment.\textsuperscript{70}

Desire for death, as described in v.8, is definitely for Calvin as a proof of belief, and vice versa.\textsuperscript{71} Nonetheless, it is important to note here that Calvin does not necessarily identifies it with an over-eager expectation for the Lord’s Day because believers “willingly retain their footing in their earthly station, so long as their Lord may see good, for they would rather live to the glory of Christ than die to themselves, (Rom.14:7), and for their own advantage.” To a question why some Old Testament believers (namely, David [Ps.6], Hezekiah [Isa.38:3], and the Israelites [Ps.115:17]) dreaded their death, Calvin replies that

\textsuperscript{68} Cf. Comm. Phil.3:20, where he mentions twofold life of a believer in this world; to go through this life quietly, and to die to the world so that Christ might live within us and that we live to him.

\textsuperscript{69} Cf. Friedrich Gustav Lang, 2.Korinther 5, 1-10 in der neueren Forschung (Tübingen, 1973), 16-17.

\textsuperscript{70} In comparison with his discussion on the same text in his Psychopannychia (see, above, 4.3.4), Calvin mostly repeats here what he affirmed in the discussion of Christian life in the 1539 Institutes.

\textsuperscript{71} Cf. CO 1:1143 (III.ix.1). In Comm. Phil.1:23(death), Calvin intently describes how Christians can overcome the fear of death by the hope of the life to come, and how many Christians are name only as they are afraid of it.
it is partly because they were neither well-informed about the future life nor given much consolation, and partly because they were simply punished by the Lord for their sins.\textsuperscript{72}

5.3. \textit{Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians}\textsuperscript{73}; \textit{1 & 2 Timothy}\textsuperscript{74}: 1548

5.3.1 \textit{Galatians 4:4 (fullness of time), Ephesians 1:10 (angels)}

In his exegesis on both texts, Calvin insists that "the fullness of time" is determined only by God so that we should neither inquire God's hidden purpose nor ask why Christ's coming is delayed (Gal.4:4),\textsuperscript{75} and warns in Ephesians 1:10 to "let human presumption restrain itself, and in judging of the succession of events, make it subject to the providence of God."\textsuperscript{76} On the issue of restoration of the world (Eph.1:10), too, he only affirms that everything in this broken world can be reordered into the perfect unity by Christ, and does not go any further.

On the other hand, however, he argues about why even angels are involved in that unity. For some, like Chrysostom,\textsuperscript{77} it is like a restored building which stands for the whole unity of angels and human beings with God, whether remained or repaired. Calvin has no

\textsuperscript{72} Cf. \textit{Inst.}, III.xxv.6 and xxvi.6.


\textsuperscript{75} CO 50:226. Calvin urges readers to confer the conclusive part of Roman's commentary in which he discussed this issue more fully. Cf. also his exegesis on Heb.9:26-27 where Calvin describes "the fullness of time" as "the maturity of that time which God had determined in his eternal purpose," and strictly forbids inquiring many curious questions about it.

\textsuperscript{76} CO 51:151. Cf. \textit{Comm.} Phil.1:25.

\textsuperscript{77} See, Chrysostom, \textit{Hom. Eph.}, 1:10.
doubt about this. Nonetheless, it seems preferable to him that angels have also needed a mediator as long as they are creatures.\textsuperscript{78} Therefore, it is Christ alone who could truly unite both angels and human beings together with God, and has inaugurated "actual harmony between heaven and earth."

5.3.2. \textit{1 Timothy 6:14-16 (Immortality)}

Fixing Christian minds on the day of Christ’s appearance was quite necessary especially in the days of Paul, Calvin states, when uncountable offences were happening in all the places (v.14). Calvin insists that the same is true even in his time and in fact almost all the ages because Satan is always at work around us.

On the issue of immortality in verse 16, Calvin argues just as Paul says that only God has immortality by which all creatures and human beings are allowed to live. Against an objection that human beings and angels also have immortality, Calvin quite clearly replies that Paul’s meaning here is that God alone is immortal by nature, and that the immortality of all the creatures is not independent but totally dependent on Him.\textsuperscript{79} For a farther discussion, Calvin encourages readers refer to Augustine’s “On the City of God,” particularly its book of twelve.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{78} This may reflect Calvin’s discussion on angels in the \textit{Institutes} (I.xiv.4-12), added to its 1543 version.

\textsuperscript{79} See, above, 4.2.1.

\textsuperscript{80} Calvin also refers to Augustine two more times in this discourse.
5.3.3. 2 Timothy 3:1 (last days)  

In Calvin’s view, Paul embraces the whole Christian church in all ages under "the last days," in which the church will be in trouble. In other words, there is and will be no such a thing as a trouble-free church in this world even if many people hope differently (v.1). In fact, Paul applies “the last days” to his own time when he gives a caution, as well as an exhortation, to Timothy. Otherwise, it will be nonsense for Timothy to be prepared for many centuries after.

5.3.4. 2 Timothy 4:6 and 8 (death, immortality, and Christ’s coming)  

Commenting a Pauline word of “dissolution,” Calvin briefly defines death not as perishing but as “a departure of the soul from the body,” and by definition it presupposes the immortality of the soul.

Calvin cannot pass over verse 8 without mentioning that all believers are to love the coming of their Lord. In fact, faith surely cannot help lifting up their hearts to the hope of resurrection. Thus, all those who deeply love this world with paying no attention to his

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81 Cf. Comm. 1 Tim. 4:1ff.

82 This Calvin’s view of “last days” is significant in his eschatology and is apparently Augustinian. Cf. for instance, Letters 199.8.23-24, “Novissimi quippe dies dicti sunt, et in ipsis primis Apostolorum diebus, cum Domini in coelum recens esset ascensus, quando die Pentecostes misit promissum Spiritum sanctum, et quidam stupebant admirantes eos qui linguis quas non didicerant, loquebantur, quidam vero irritantes, musto plenos esse dicebant…. Iam tunc ergo erant dies novissimi; quanto magis nunc, etiamsi tantum dierum remanit usque in finem, quantum ad hunc diem a Domini ascensione transactum est, vel aliquid sive minus restet sive amplius?” (PL 33).

83 Cf. above, 4.3.3, n.117 (Zimmerli, 47).
coming, divest themselves of glorious immortality. Moreover, Calvin asserts, it is no true believers in whom nothing is produced from Christ’s coming but dread and fear.  

5.4. *Hebrews*: 1549

5.4.1. *Hebrews* Introduction & Chapters 1-2 (kingdom of Christ), and 4 (highest happiness)

In 1549, Calvin published another commentary on a book of the Bible, the epistle to the Hebrews, with a dedicatory letter to the king of Poland. In the letter, Calvin introduces topics of the book: Christ's divine nature, government, and priesthood, in other words, "the whole power and work of Christ." Therefore, this commentary may serve as an encouragement to the king, Calvin writes, "who is already speeding up to restore the kingdom of Christ." Calvin is quite confident that even if Poland is flourished in many ways it will be solid only when it adapts Christ as its chief and highest governor.

It seems, thus, that Calvin is more confident and concerned with how the kingdom of Christ should be fulfilled in this world, even though it will not be accomplished until the last day, than he was when he wrote a dedicatory letter of the first *Institutes* to the king of France. At the time of 1536, Calvin was still wondered if the king could have a concern

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86 CO 13:281-86.
with “how Christ’s Kingdom may be restored and defended among us.”

But now, he is quite assured of the progress of its restoration, at least in Poland. Although the commentary itself was not necessarily affected by any political issues around the author, Calvin seems to take the case of Poland for one of the examples of ongoing restoration of God’s kingdom, which can be done only through "the perpetual oracles of our heavenly Master" or "the pure doctrine of the Gospel.”

This Calvin’s concern with the kingdom of Christ is also displayed in his commentaries. By way of exposing psalms cited in chapter 1 of the Hebrews, Calvin repeatedly refers to "the kingdom of Christ," even if the texts of the Psalms themselves do not mention it directly. In fact, Calvin states, the whole Psalm is about the kingdom of Christ.

Again, as he interprets Psalm 8 in chapter 2 of the Hebrews, Calvin states that although this psalm seems to be misapplied to Christ for it originally maintains the beneficial state of human beings over creatures, it does suit Christ because they lost their privilege by their sins and it is Christ who has begun to restore it. Taking the word "the

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87 OS 1:23. See, ch.7.
88 CO 13:283.
89 Calvin uses the term "the kingdom of Christ" roughly over thirty times in this book.
90 vss.5, 6, 8, 10, and 13.
91 v.10: "Fateor quidem, toto psalmo non nominari Christum : sed palam est ita designari, ut nemo dubitet, ex professo nobis commendari eius regnum."
92 v.6: “Si deinde totum psalmum percurras, nihil aliud videbis quam regnum Christi, quod ab evangeli publicatione coepit. Nec aliud est argumentum psalmi quam veluti solenne diploma, quo in eius regni possessionem mittitur Christus.” Note that, although Calvin’s commentaries on the Psalms were published eight years later, his series of sermons on them have started in the same year of the publication of Commentary on the Hebrews.
world to come" (v.5) as a notion to the restored world, Calvin affirms that "here ‘the world to come’ is apparently not at any rate that which we hope for after the resurrection, but that which began at the beginning of Christ's kingdom, though it will certainly have its full accomplishment in the ultimate redemption."\(^93\)

On the other hand, in chapter 4, Calvin writes about "the highest happiness" or the "ultimate end" of man, referring to the "rest" which all believers enter (vv.3ff). According to Calvin, it is nothing but “union with God” to which we are to devote ourselves.\(^94\) Although our salvation itself is still in hope, that is, unaccomplished, and yet as long as the saving truth is concerned, it straightly guides us to heaven (vs.8f). On verse 10, Calvin mentions the "perpetual Sabbath" as we have seen in his exposition of the fourth commandment both in his catechisms and in the *Institutes*.\(^95\) While Calvin's explanation is basically same as it was in his former works, it seems that he insists more of resting from our own works, or "self-denial," and of being formed in accordance with God.\(^96\)

5.4.2. *Hebrews 10:25 (the last day)*

Calvin understands “the day approaching” differently from other interpreters who take it in terms of Romans 13:11 (“It is time to awake out of sleep…”).\(^97\) For Calvin, “the

\(^93\) CO55:24-25.

\(^94\) See, our ch.4.

\(^95\) See, ch.2.

\(^96\) Cf. also Calvin’s argument on the same commandment in his 1539 *Institutes* (see, 3.2.1.).

time” in the book of the Romans is the time when the celestial light of Gospel had already come though the full brightness of the future life has not yet. 98 The “day” in Hebrews, on the other hand, is the day of Christ’s coming which encourages believers more diligently to assemble and unite them into one. In reply to a question “how could the Apostle 99 say that those who were as yet afar off from the manifestation of Christ, saw the day near and just at hand?,” Calvin gives us a significant discussion which is a kind of summary of his view of “last day,” as follows:

From the beginning of the kingdom of Christ the Church was so constituted that the faithful ought to have considered the Judge as coming soon; nor were they indeed deceived by a false fantasy, when they were prepared to receive Christ almost every moment; for such was the condition of the Church from the time the Gospel was promulgated, that the whole of that period might truly and properly be called the last. Thus, those who have been dead many ages ago lived in the last days no less than we. 100

Therefore, Calvin affirms, even if people laugh at a simple belief on the bodily resurrection as well as the last judgment, the belief is unshaken because a thousand years are like a day for the Lord, and also because “since Christ, after having completed all things necessary for our salvation, has ascended into heaven, it is but reasonable that we who are continually

98 Calvin explains the meaning of Rom.13:11 more clearly in his comment as follows: “Haec est occasio cuius nuper meminit Quamquam enim nondum in plenam lucem recepti sunt fideles: merito tamen aurorae comparat futurae vitae notitiam, quae nobis per evangelium affulget Neque enim dies hic, sicuti aliis locis, pro fidei luce ponitur (alioqui non diceret appropinquasse tantum, sed adesse, imo iam lucere tanquam in medio progressu), sed pro beata illa coelestis vitae claritate, cuiibs initia in evangelio iam cernuntur” (CO 49:255).

99 For the authorship of the epistle, see, Argumentum of the Commentary.

100 “sic ab initio regni Christi constitutam fuisse ecclesiam, ut quasi mox venturum iudicem sibi proponere debuerint fideles. Nec vero fallaci imaginatione delusi fuerunt, quam ad excipiendum Christum singulis fere momentis parati essent. Talis enim ab evangelii promulgatione fuit ecclesiae status, ut vere et proprio totum illud tempus vocetur extremum. Proinde qui iam a multis saeculis sunt mortui, non minus quam nos, sub novissimis diebus vixerunt” (CO55:133).
looking for his second manifestation should regard every day as though it were the last.”

5.4.3. Hebrews 12:18-29 (Christ’s coming and eternal kingdom)

On this another important passage, Calvin provides us a picture of “the excellency of Christ’s kingdom” in comparison with the Mosaic dispensation. It also might give a hint, if not a key, to understand Calvin’s view of the apocalyptic texts or symbols in the Old Testament prophets. On “the heavenly Jerusalem” in verse 22, Calvin regards it as a world-wide kingdom (as mentioned in Zechariah), where we are called into the company of angels (as in the book of Daniel), the ranks of patriarchs and other saints whose names are written in the secret book of God (as Ezekiel says), and the blessed spirits of the dead who took off their earthly bodies and now live with God. Thus, this text is another biblical proof for the existence of believers’ souls after life with God.

Though Calvin admits the passage in verse 26 is not an exact quotation from Haggai, he undoubtedly confirms that it is the kingdom of Christ to which the prophet refers because it is in Christ alone that all nations have been called into unity; that we can have any desire to obey; and that the Jerusalem temple is exceeded. Then, on the next verse, Calvin maintains that all the creatures will be changed to better ones at the time of Christ’s coming and thus his eternal kingdom is unshakably established. Taking an exhortative reading of the sentence (“let us have grace”) as an affirmative, Calvin further asserts that we are to enjoy the grace above and devoutly serve Christ since his kingdom, as well as the gift of regeneration, comes only from above; hence we can enter it by faith alone.

For Calvin in his exposition on verse 28, one of the things which will become obvious at the time of Christ’s coming is "the efficacy of his death," that is, how effectively
and completely our sins have been forgiven through the death of Christ. That will happen, however, Calvin states with reference to 1 Thessalonians 1:10, only among godly believers who desire for his coming because the unbelievers dread it.

5.5. 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John, and Jude: 1551

This year is another productive year for Calvin in terms of publication of his biblical commentary. While a commentary on Titus, as well as the second edition of the Romans Commentary, was published in 1550, commentaries both on the rest of Pauline epistles, namely, 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Philemon, and on the so-called catholic epistles of James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 John, and Jude appeared in 1551. It is also the year when the first Old Testament commentary on Isaiah came out.

It seems that Calvin’s hermeneutical approach to the New Testament teachings about last things has been already well-established up to this time through such former writings as Psychopannychia, the second edition of the Institutes, and commentaries on

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102 CO52:437-450. See, de Greef, Writings of John Calvin, 98.


105 See, Parker, Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries, ch.2.

106 It was published first in 1550 in French (CO55:377-436).

107 We will deal with Old Testament prophets in the next chapter.
Romans, Corinthians, and Hebrews while his doctrinal and exegetical knowledge around
the topic also seems increased. A couple of texts are worth mentioning here.

5.5.1. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 (the resurrection of the living)\textsuperscript{108}

Calvin knew that Augustine was troubled with the problem of resurrection of the living at Christ’ coming because Paul says elsewhere that “seed cannot spring up again unless it die” (1 Cor. 15:36).\textsuperscript{109} Like Augustine, Calvin states that they shall experience a kind of death, and yet explains in his own way, employing Augustinian distinction between the “substance” of the body and its “quality,” that “those who sleep put off the substance of the body for some space of time, but those that will be suddenly changed will put off nothing but the quality.”\textsuperscript{110} Although Augustine has been always a major source in Calvin’s doctrinal arguments, the reformer cites him a couple of times even in his biblical commentaries of this time.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{108} Another significant question related to our topic may be of chiliasm mentioned in the comment on v.17. Yet, Calvin just refers that this refuted view belongs to Origen as well as the Chiliasts.

\textsuperscript{109} See, Civita dei, 20:20.

\textsuperscript{110} “quod qui dormiunt aliquo temporis spatio, corporis exuunt substantiam: qui autem subito innovabuntur, non nisi qualitatem exuent” (CO 52:167). Cf. Inst. (1559), III.xxv.8; Comm. on Rom. 8:20, 1 Cor. 15:51, 52, and 2 Peter 3:11.

\textsuperscript{111} Ex. Comm. 2 Pt. 3:6 (Augustine, Civita dei, 20:24) and 1 Jn. 3:2 (Augustine, Civita dei, 22:29 and ad Fortunatos).
5.5.2. 2 Thessalonians 1:10 (the second coming of Christ, the final resurrection, and the church)

Calvin discusses here the relationship between the second coming of Christ, the final resurrection, and the salvation of “the Church.” The notion of “the Church” is particularly important because it gives a more corporate sense (the whole body of the elect) to the event of the final resurrection. Calvin develops this corporative aspect of the eschatological events prominently in his lectures on the prophetic books of the Old Testament.\(^{112}\)

5.5.3. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (Antichrist)

This text is significant because Calvin seems to share his contemporary view of history especially in regard with Antichrist,\(^{113}\) as follows:

Paul, however, does not speak of one person, but of a kingdom that was occupied by Satan, that he might set up a seat of abomination in the midst of God’s temple—which we see accomplished in Popery. Indeed, the revolt is spread more widely, for Mahomet, as he was an apostate, turned away his Turks from Christ. All heretics have broken the unity of the Church by their sects.\(^{114}\)

\(^{112}\) See, the next chapter, especially in the lecture on Daniel 12:2.

\(^{113}\) Calvin’s description of Antichrist is rather simple in comparison, for instance, with Bullinger. Cf. his *A commentary vpon the seconde epistle of S Paul to the Thessalonia[n]s* : In the which besydes the summe of oure faythe, ther is sincereelye handled [and] set forth at large, not onely fyrst co[m]myng vp [and] rysyng with the full properyte [and] dominion, but also the fall and vter confusion of the kyngdome of Antichriste: that is to say of Machomet [and] the byshop of Rome (1538) and *Vom Antichrist vnnd seine Reich : warhafftige vnnd schrifftliche Erweisung ; das ander Capitel der andern Epistel S. Pauli zü den Thessalonichern / mit eyner schönen Ausslegung Heinrychi Bullingeri ; durch Melchior Ambach verteutscht* (1541).

The passage is followed by the discussion of Popery as Antichrist in his comment on verses 4 and 11. A view that the Turks, heretics, and Popery are signs of the end time can be seen in medieval theologians, Bernard in particular.

5.5.4. 1 Peter 3:19 (Christ’s descent to Hades)

The text may be another interesting example for Calvin’s exegesis. In contrast with his interpretation in Psychopannychia, Calvin no longer takes it as a description of Christ’s descent to Hades though his exegesis itself remains in some ambiguity.

Nonetheless, Calvin still refers to the passage in the explanation of the “descent into hell” of the Apostles’ Creed in his final edition of the Institutes, maintaining that “he [Peter] extols the power of [Christ’s] death in that it penetrated even to the dead.” In other words, Calvin views the passage as a reference to the relation of Christ’s death to the state of the dead.

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116 Bernard divided the age of church militant into three parts, and insisted that the church had to fight against Satan through the Roman persecution in the first age; heresies and pagans in the second; and the enemies within in the third. In the last age, according to Bernard, Antichrist would appear within the church and reign pretending to be an agent of Christ. Cf. Sermons on the Song of Songs, 33:7-16. See, Oberman, “The Shape of Late Medieval Thought,” 29-30.

117 There was diversity of interpretation on the text even among the ancient exegetes. See, for example, Oecumenius (PG119:561) and Theophylact (PG125:1237-1240).

118 Inst (1559), II.xvi.9 (OS 3:494).
5.6. Acts and Gospels: 1552-1555

Just as he did in the dedicatory epistle of the Hebrews commentary to the king of Poland, Calvin repeatedly refers to “the kingdom of Christ” also in the dedications of the commentary on Acts both in 1552 (part 1), 1554 (part 2), 1560 (its second edition). As far as Calvin’s basic exegetical approach to the last things is concerned, it is largely maintained in the commentaries of on Acts, John, and the Synoptic Gospels.

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120 CO 14:292-296. Calvin brought the same message to his son as well in the dedication of part 2. See also, ch.7.

121 CO 15:14-17.

122 CO 18:155-161.

123 Ex., in his comment on Acts 1:11, Calvin urges us not to ponder about uncertain things like the position of “heaven” or Jesus’ clothing at the time of his return.

124 On the issue of the intermediate state, in the commentary on John 14:2, Calvin rejects the erroneous interpretation on the text on the one hand, yet on the other hand he argues about “the condition of the fathers after death, before Christ ascended to heaven.” Contrary to an interpretation of taking “rooms” or “place” as the grades of various glories, Calvin explains them as either the place for the day of resurrection or the state of waiting in which both patriarchs and we experience the blessed rest until the last day of completion. This is obviously the view that Calvin presented in his Psychopannychia.

125 We will refer to some examples in his Gospel Commentary as follows: in Matt.3:2, for Calvin, heaven is nothing but the new life by which God restores us the hope of blessed immortality, and the essence of the Gospel is God’s acceptance of us that we might live on earth the life of self-denial, bearing the discipline (= the cross), and meditation on the heavenly life (Cf. the chapter of a Christian life in the 1539 Institutes); in Matt.3:12, as “winnowing” has been being proceeded everyday since Christ’s time, and yet will be never completed until the end, the believers have already entered God’s “barn,” that is their eternal residence, by hope; in Matt.5:3, the bless is remitted to only those who have learned humility under the discipline of the cross (Cf. the chapter in the 1539 Institutes above); in Matt.6:9-13, though Calvin basically follows his view of the second petition of the Lord’s prayer in his Catechisms (see, ch.2), he seems to intensify the gradual aspect of the progress of the kingdom; in Luke16:19-31, Calvin’s views on afterlife, hope of OT fathers, sufferings of cross of God’s children, and meditation on the heavenly life, are largely in accordance with his own views in Psychopannychia and the 1539 Institutes; in Matt.22:23ff, Calvin states that resurrection, which surpasses human senses, and the immortality of soul are undividable (Cf. Psychopannychia, and Comm. Acts 23:8), and that holy fathers (=patriarchs) aspired to the heavenly life and that the covenant which God had made with them was spiritual and eternal (Cf. the 1539 Institutes, and Comm. Gen.17); just like he did in his Psychopannychia, Calvin explains the text of Luke 23:43 that whoever
though there are also some new aspects or insights, Calvin displays in his comments, for our topic.

5.6.1. John 5:28 (spiritual resurrection)

One such example, among others, is his exegesis on John 5:28.\textsuperscript{126} There Calvin discusses not only the bodily resurrection but also the spiritual one, which he rarely mentions in the \textit{Institutes}, though he does not so much emphasize it as Augustine, Luther, and the Anabaptists did. The spiritual resurrection or the regeneration of soul by the voice of the Gospel is for Calvin the beginning or preparation of the ultimate resurrection.\textsuperscript{127} And commenting on the phrase “... shall hear his voice,” he states that: “The voice of the Son means the blast of the trumpet, which will sound by the command and power of Christ.”\textsuperscript{128} This figurative interpretation of “the trumpet” at the time of final resurrection is seldom mentioned by other commentators but Calvin, especially in terms of 1 Corinthians 15:52.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{126} CO 47:119. See, also, \textit{Comm.} John 11:25.

\textsuperscript{127} Cf. \textit{Comm.} Acts 1:3 and Matt. 24:31. For Calvin, “Huius regni initium est regeneratio: finis ac complementum, beata immortalitas.” Therefore, “ad perfectionem regni Dei magis accedimus: quae est divinae gloriae societas,” as much as the inward man is renewed in us.

\textsuperscript{128} CO 47:119, “vox filii clangorem tubae significat, qui christi iussu et virtute personabit.”

\textsuperscript{129} See, above. One of the earliest references identifying the trumpet in the said text of John with the voice of Christ is Irenaeus (\textit{Adversus haereses}, V.13.1).
5.6.2. Matthew 10:23 (the coming of the Son of God)

Calvin knows that there is quite diversity of the interpretation on the text. Some understand it as a progress of the gospel acknowledging that Christ is truly reigning to restore the kingdom of David; others as destruction of Jerusalem. Considering the former interpretation admissible and the latter too far-fetched, Calvin understands it as Christ’s consolation for the apostles. That is that he will shed by the power of his Spirit such luster around his reign so that the apostles be enabled to discern that glory and majesty.

5.6.3. Matthew 16:28 (the coming of the Son of God)

The same approach is taken in his exegesis on Jesus’ saying in Matthew 16:28. According to Calvin, it is again for his disciples. The coming of the kingdom of God indicates “manifestation of heavenly glory” and thus appears only after Christ’s resurrection and the Pentecost. They were assured thereby that Christ is now on the right side of his Father. It seems that Calvin has already had a certain view of historical progress of the kingdom of God and applies it to his interpretation for Gospel narratives as his hermeneutical framework. We will discuss further Calvin’s view of the kingdom of God / Christ in the next chapter.

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131 According to Künzi, this Calvin’s rather new interpretation is preceded by such an exegete as Wolfgang Musculus (Das Naherwartungslogion, Matthäus 10, 23, 196).

5.6.4. Matthew 27:45ff (darkness, the opening of graves)

In chapter 27 of Matthew, Calvin shows us some interesting exegesis. On “darkness” over all the land in v.45, he rejects the natural understanding of it as an eclipse of the sun, and takes it as “a terrific spectacle” or “a incomparable proof of the wrath of God” persuading people to anticipate “an approaching renovation of the world.” When Jesus died in v.50, he committed not only his soul, but “he included all his faithful souls, as it were, in one bundle.” Thus, “whoever, following Stephan’s example, believes in Christ will not breathe his dying soul out into the air, but will resort to a faithful guardian who safely keeps whatever has been delivered to him by the Father.”

As for the opening of graves at v.52, according to Calvin, it was the event “by which God declared that his Son entered into the prison of death, not to continue to be shut up there, but to bring out all who were held captive.” Calvin, however, feels doubtful that the opening of the graves took place before Christ’s resurrection because it is Christ who is called the first-born (Col. 1:18) or the first fruit (1 Cor. 15:20). Moreover, Calvin even tries to answer with some speculation the question of what happened to those risen people afterwards. His guess is that they probably went back to their graves again after they witnessed Christ’s power, but their resurrected lives were not taken away because they

\[\text{133 CO 45:782.}\]
\[\text{134 CO 45:783-784.}\]
\[\text{135 Cf. Aquinas, Catena Aurea, Matt., cap.27, lec.10, “Hieronymus. Quomodo autem Lazarus mortuus resurrexit, sic et multa corpora sanctorum resurrexerunt, ut dominum ostenderent resurgentem; et tamen cum monumenta aperta sunt, non ante resurrexerunt quam resurgeret dominus, ut esset primogenitus resurrectionis ex mortuis.” Cf. also, Jerome, Letter 60 (To Heliodorus):3, “et idcirco in resurrectione eius multa dormientium corpora surrexerunt et uisa sunt in caelesti Hierusalem”(CSEL 54:551).}\]
could not be proofs of the perfect resurrection if they have been perishable ones.\textsuperscript{136}

We may add one more text in the Gospels in regard with Christ’s resurrection. In his exegesis on Luke 24:39ff., despite his definite insistence of Christ’s bodily resurrection especially by pierced side, feet, and hands, Calvin regards it as foolish to imagine that the marks will remained when he shall come to judge the world.\textsuperscript{137} He also rejects as foolish the question of the kind of food that would be eaten by the resurrected Christ.


With reference to Mark 15:43 and Luke 23:51, Calvin discusses about the kingdom of God, for which Joseph of Arimathaea hoped, describing that it is “the renewal promised through Christ; for the integrity of order, which the prophets had every where promised to be at the coming of Christ, cannot exist unless God assembles the dissipated people under his government” and that “he sets up the kingdom of God by restoring affairs from confusion and disorder to a right and legitimate condition.” This understanding of the kingdom sounds closer to the view which he discusses in his commentaries on the Old Testament prophets.

\textsuperscript{136} Cf. Aquinas, Catena Aurea, Matt., cap.27, lec.10, “Remigius. Quaeret autem aliquis quid de illis factum sit qui resurgente domino surrexerunt. Credendum quippe est quoniam ideo surrexerunt ut testes essent dominicae resurrectionis. Quidam autem dixerunt, quod iterum mortui sunt, et in cinerem conversi, sicut et Lazaurus, et ceteri quos dominus resuscitavit. Sed istorum dictis nullo modo est fides accommodanda: quoniam maius illis esset tormentum qui surrexerunt, si iterum mortui essent, quam si non resurgerent. Incunctanter ergo credere debemus quia qui resurgente domino a mortuis resurrexerunt, ascendente eo ad caelos, et ipsi pariter ascenderunt.”

\textsuperscript{137} Cf. Aquinas, Catena Aurea, Luke, cap.24, lec.4, “Gregorius Moralium.... Solent autem in hoc loco gentiles calumniam struere, quas non valuerit dominus vulnera sibi inflicta curare: quibus respondendum est, quia non est consequens ut qui majora fecisse probatur, minora facere nequiverit.”
5.7. Conclusions to Calvin’s Eschatology in His New Testament Commentaries

1. Calvin’s commentaries on Pauline letters seem consistent in their exegetical method even after a hiatus of six years from his first commentary, yet definitely more learned, having profited from the works of other exegetes, past and present. Even though it is quite sure that Calvin has learned much from Chrysostom, for instance, there is no certain exegete he consistently follows. For Calvin, the simple meaning of the text itself always has priority.

2. As for his interpretation on the last things implicated in various biblical texts, it is largely framed by his view on the topic that appeared in his earlier works, *Psychopannychia*, the 1539 *Institutes*, and the *Romans Commentary* in particular. As far as the treatise of *Psychopannychia* is concerned, Calvin’s belief in the blessedness of believer’s soul afterlife is consistently demonstrated also in his biblical commentaries; however, his exegetical outcomes on the proof texts in *Psychopannychia* are in many cases corrected in the commentaries. This is not only because of Calvin’s development of skill of exegesis, but also because of differences of purpose and method of those works. Take Luke 23:43 for instance, in his commentary, Calvin simply skips interpreting the word “today” which was one of the points of his argument in *Psychopannychia*, and more emphasizes Christ’s gracious readiness for the acceptance of even a thief.

3. Calvin’s commentary on the book of Hebrews may be an important piece for his career of a biblical exegete. As Hagen points out in his comparative study of “argumentum” of the Hebrews commentaries in Reformation era,\(^\text{138}\) the emphasis upon the agreement

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between law and gospel or the continuity between the Old and New Testaments are distinctive in Calvin’s *Commentary* as we have seen in his 1539 *Institutes*. In his commentaries, however, Calvin displays more dynamically the progress and realization of Christ’s kingdom from the Old Testament time to the New, and eventually to its accomplishment, than he did in his own Pauline commentaries. This Calvin’s view of Christ’s kingdom will be fully demonstrated in his later Old Testament commentaries.

4. For his exegesis on most of eschatological texts in the Gospels, Calvin employs his view of last things which he established in his Pauline commentaries. Yet, he seems perplexed at times to deal with difficult sayings or curious events appeared in the Gospels which do not always fit to the Pauline paradigm. Although there are interesting or even speculative interpretations, some of which are similar to those of his preceding exegetes, in Calvin’s Gospel commentaries, it is nevertheless his basic attitude in his exegesis to seek a simple meaning of the text and keep away from human curiosity as much as possible.

5.8. *Genesis* (1554) and *Psalms* (1557)

Even before completing a series of the New Testament commentaries, Calvin had started working on the Old Testament commentaries and published at least two of them, namely, Isaiah in 1551\(^{139}\) and Genesis in 1554.\(^{140}\) While we shall look closely in the last chapter at Calvin’s hermeneutics of the Old Testament, particularly books of prophets


including Isaiah, let us look briefly at his thoughts on the last things appeared in two of his early Old Testament commentaries on Genesis and Psalms.\footnote{See, Parker, \textit{Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries}, 29ff. and de Greef, \textit{Writings of John Calvin}, 105.}

5.8.1. \textit{Genesis (1554)}

For Calvin, the first book of Moses is not just a book about a creation story as he discusses in the “Argumentum” of the book. It rather tells us the history of restoration of human beings, who were originally created to meditate upon a better life, from the state of fall by God’s compassion, then of those who worship God with hope of the celestial life, and of the fathers who lived in hope with enduring the cross and thus became models for us. In other words, it “sets the course, indeed, as in a mirror before our eyes, in which it is rightly to strive us with the holy Fathers towards the goal of a blessed immortality.”\footnote{“imo tanquam in speculo nobis stadium ob oculos statuitur, quo nos cum Sanctis patribus ad beatae immortalitatis metam eniti decet” (CO23:11-12).}

These eschatological aspects or intentions of Genesis stories are obviously related to the subjects which Calvin discussed in his second edition of the \textit{Institutes} especially in both chapters on the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments, and the life of a Christian man.\footnote{See, ch.3. Cf. \textit{Comm.} Gen. 38:7, “hoc tarnen iudicium Deus sub lege magis exercuit, quum obscurior adhuc foret futurae vitae cognitio: neque enim ex quo resurrectio nobis in Christo patefacta est, tantopere mortem horori esse convenit. Atque hoc inter nos et veterem populum discrimen alibi notatum est.”} As Calvin regards, in the 1539 \textit{Institutes}, the subject like the hope for eternal life and resurrection as a crucial linkage of both Testaments and one of the hermeneutical keys to the Old Testament exegesis, it is not so hard to find out those examples in his Genesis commentary.
For Calvin, the translation of Enoch from the earthly life to God (5:24) is an example of immortality or “a visible mirror of a blessed resurrection”\(^{144}\) by which God arouse our minds up to a better life. Although Enoch died a kind of death, as far as it means to put off his corruptible nature and to be freed from miseries of the present life, he was not yet in the state of perfect glory which he will experience with all other members of the Church when they meet their Lord and “the whole body may be united to its Head.”\(^{145}\) When God foretold Abraham that he would die in peace, he never doubted that there was a better life prepared for him in heaven (15:15). In the story of Isaac’s dedication, he was “the mirror of eternal life” (22:3). Even if the doctrine of resurrection was still obscure among the ancient people of God (23:2), a common habit of burial was a sign of sense of future life which God has imbued the human minds. Thus to bury his wife’s dead body in the tomb became a more powerful and visible symbol for Abraham, who “has the hope of resurrection deeply fixed in his heart” (23:3), that he was assured that he and she should be gathered in the kingdom of God (23:8).\(^{146}\) And again, on the burial of Jacob (50:2), Calvin wrote that “it is not to be doubted (as we have said elsewhere) that the rite of burying the dead decended from the holy fathers, to be a mirror of the future resurrection.”

\(^{144}\) CO 23:107-108.

\(^{145}\) CO 23:108.

\(^{146}\) Comm. Gen. 35:17.
5.8.2. *Psalms* (1557)

After Calvin has published the biblical commentaries of nearly all New Testament books as well as Isaiah and Genesis, his lectures on Old Testament prophets have now started being published with the book of Hosea in 1557. It is in the same year that his long-awaited commentary on the Psalter eventually appeared.\(^{147}\)

Although Calvin’s commentary on this “anatomy of all the parts of the soul” provides various topics to the readers, there are few passages which give a new perspective to our subjects.\(^{148}\) Just as in the book of Genesis, some texts arouse us to the hope of the blessed immortality,\(^{149}\) resurrection,\(^{150}\) or eternal life\(^{151}\); others teach bearing cross in this earthly life.\(^{152}\) In contrast, since Calvin regards David and his psalms prophetic, it is one of characteristics of the commentary that he willingly applies most of descriptions of the Davidic kingdom to the Christ’s kingdom,\(^{153}\) though he was cautious about the

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\(^{147}\) Calvin has been expounding the Psalms since 1552, discussed and studied during *congregations* since 1555. See, de Groot, *Writings of John Calvin*, 105.

\(^{148}\) Cf. Herman J. Selderhuis, *Calvin’s Theology of the Psalm* (Grand Rapids, 2007), especially 171-178.

\(^{149}\) *Comm.* Pss. 8:5, 9:12, 16:11; 79:3; 89:30; 109:8, 128:2.

\(^{150}\) *Comm.* Pss. 16:10, 49:15, 78:39.

\(^{151}\) *Comm.* Pss. 52:8, 111:9, 147:19.


oversimplified Christological approach to the psalms with trying to interpret them as contextually as possible.\textsuperscript{154}

\textsuperscript{154} Comm. Pss. 16:10, 50:1, 51:19, 75:3, 82:8, 87:4, 88:10, 90:3.
CHAPTER 6
ESCHATOLOGY AS A THEOLOGICAL LOCUS: THE 1551-1559 INSTITUTES

6.1. Introduction

The doctrine of the final resurrection of the body has an interesting history in Calvin’s thought. Calvin touches it only briefly both in the first edition of Institutes of the Christian Religion and the 1537 and 1545 Catechisms, whereas it was strongly defended in Psychopannychia. On the other hand, along with editions of the Institutes, Calvin expanded his discussion and eventually provided a whole chapter for the subject in the final edition (1559), and located it in the end of the third section of “the way how the grace of Christ will be received”\(^1\) as if it were a conclusion of the section.

Similarly, scholars’ understandings of Calvin’s view on the subject vary. For those who see Calvin’s anthropology as more or less soul-body dualistic, the doctrine of the resurrection seems somewhat out of place in his thought.\(^2\) Others, in contrast, maintain that for Calvin it is “the centre of the Christian hope”\(^3\) or of the Christian ethics,\(^4\) and even that

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\(^2\) See, Martin Schulze, Meditatio Futurae Vitae: Ihr Begriff und Ihre Herrschende Stellung im System Calvins (Leipzig, 1901), 88, and Zimmerli’s introduction to Psychopannychia, 6.


Reformed eschatology is primarily “an eschatology of the resurrection.” Among the latter scholars, a Christ-centered understanding of Calvin’s view has been dominant.

As we have done in previous chapters, we will try in this chapter as well to present Calvin’s view on the doctrine in the light of both historical and literary context, particularly in the final edition of the Institutes, as properly as possible.

6.2. Historical Background of the Doctrine of the Final Resurrection

6.2.1. Early and Middle Ages

In the opening lines of his treatise De resurrectione carnis, one of the earliest works on the subject, Tertullian writes that the resurrection of the dead is the Christian’s trust [fiducia] by which we are believers. The resurrection of the body is, needless to say, one of the fundamental Christian doctrines. While every church father took that for granted, it was Irenaeus and Tertullian who intensely defended the doctrine against the Gnostic attack.

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5 Thomas F. Torrance, Kingdom and Church: A Study in the Theology of the Reformation (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956), 5. Torrance connects Reformed eschatology with early Greek Fathers in their emphasis on the renewal of the world, as well as the bodily resurrection, in contrast with the Lutheran eschatology of the final judgment, though he admits that the “line cannot be drawn very sharply” (ibid.). Cf. Robin Bruce Barnes, Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 32. Jacques Pannier also points out, in one of the footnotes to his French edition of Calvin’s Institutes, that the victorious tone of Calvinistic piety is due to its view of the resurrection (Institution de la Religion Chrestien, III, 383, n. b, c on 108).

6 See, for example, Quistorp, Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things, 108; Torrance, Kingdom and Church, 93; Ronald S. Wallace, Calvin’s Doctrine of the Christian Life (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), 78-86; and Erhard Kunz, Protestantische Eschatologie: Von der Reformation bis zur Aufklärung. Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte, vol. 4, ed. Michael Schmaus et al (Freiburg: Herder, 1980), 40-41. Even if their works are based on the thorough research on Calvin’s writings, their presentations often show theological tendency of their own, not always Calvin’s.

7 Tertullian, De resurrectione carnis, 1:1.

8 See, for examples, Clement of Rome (πρὸς Κορινθίους), 24-26; Justin, De resurrectione, frag.; Athenagoras, De resurrectione mortuorum; Tatian, Pros Hellenas, 6.
Employing the words of Christ and Paul, Irenaeus refutes the Gnostic denial of the bodily resurrection. Among his arguments, one of the crucial points in defense is the power of God. As the apostle states (2 Cor.12:9), the power of God shines in the weakness of human body. Hence, why does not the One who created human beings from dust of the earth and gave them life also raise after this earthly life not only our soul but our body as well and give it the eternal life? Moreover, Christ’s resurrection itself is the very proof of the divine power by which we will also be quickened in the same bodies, though incorruptible. Concerning souls of the dead, Irenaeus indicates that while they shall go away into the invisible place allotted to them by God, and remain there until the resurrection with awaiting it, they then shall receive their own bodies and raise, just as the Lord arose, to come into the presence of God. Thus, the saints will receive the reward of their suffering in the very flesh in which they were afflicted.

Tertullian, likewise, rigorously argues against his contemporary “Sadducees,” namely the Valentinian Gnostics. The intention of his argument is solely to defend the teaching of the bodily resurrection as a doctrine of the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments. Although Tertullian is not unaware of the Pauline precept of the spiritual

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13 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 2.
14 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 18-55. He insisted elsewhere of that even the issue of soul should not discussed by philosophers’ opinions but by the divine words. See, *De Anima*, 1.
resurrection, his defense for the bodily resurrection is so intense that it is almost “eulogy” for the raised body. Like Irenaeus, Tertullian emphasizes the power of God which makes the resurrection of the body possible, and maintains that by trusting the God’s power as well as His words, Christians can hope and pray for the resurrection in the last day. Finally, Tertullian argues for the identity of the resurrected and earthly body though different in nature, and its wholeness.

Although the anti-Gnostic fathers convincingly defended the resurrection of the body, particularly its material continuity or identity, it is Augustine in whose works we can find “the questions and answers fundamental to the entire course of scholastic debate in the high Middle Ages.” In fact, his views on the resurrection can be found in many places, especially in *Enchiridion* and his masterful work, *De civitate Dei*.

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15 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 23. Cf. also with his argument on the moralization of the resurrection (ibid, 19).

16 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 5-10.

17 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 11.

18 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 22.

19 Tertullian, *De resurrectione carnis*, 55-63.


21 See, for examples, Augustine, *De fide et symbole*, 10.23-24; *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 37.1.9, 89.32, 102.24, 131.4ff, 144.3; *Sermones*, 214 (“In traditioone symboli”).12, 234 (“In deibus paschalibus”).3, 241 (“In deibus paschalibus / De resurrectione corporum, contra gentiles”).1, 361 (“De resurrectione mortuorum”).2.2.

For Augustine, the resurrection by which both soul and body are united to God is the foundation of the Christian hope. That hope is rooted in the God’s almighty and Christ’s resurrection. The soul departed from the body awaits the day of resurrection when it shall be united with the perfect “spiritual body.” It is the incorruptibly resurrected or heavenly body filled with the grace of Christ distinct from the “animate” one, though same in physicality. The saints shall see God not only in soul but also in their spiritual bodies after the resurrection.

While Augustine holds the traditional view of the resurrection, his argument goes slightly different way than the anti-Gnostic fathers’. One of his major concerns, in question, is about the condition of the resurrected body. He discusses various issues around it such as the cases of abortive or monstrous babies, and the height and sex of the resurrection body. His basic point of apology is the material integrity of the raised body. Whatever

23 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 22.11-29.
24 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 13.19, 20.21.
25 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 21.7, 22.7.
26 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 10.29, 22.5, 12, 18.
27 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 13.20, 22.
28 Augustine, Enchiridion, 91.
29 Augustine, Enchiridion, 91 and De civitate Dei, 22.19, 21. As for the resurrection of the lost people, Augustine simply asserts that it is just for punishment. See, Enchiridion, 92.
30 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 22.29.
31 Augustine, Enchiridion, 85 and De civitate Dei, 22.13.
32 Augustine, Enchiridion, 87 and De civitate Dei, 22.14.
33 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 22.15, 17.
happens to our earthly bodies, they will be restored and reunited at the moment of the final resurrection.\textsuperscript{34}

It was medieval Scholastics in the West who argued and further elaborated the issues or questions raised by Augustine.\textsuperscript{35} Thomas Aquinas, for instance, argues in his \textit{Summa contra gentiles}\textsuperscript{36} and in the \textit{supplementum} of \textit{Summa theologiae}\textsuperscript{37} about the nature or characteristics of the resurrected body, as well as many other trivial matters, quite extensively.\textsuperscript{38} Nonetheless, his argument for Christ’s resurrection and the divine power as the cause of ours is important. Aquinas quite clearly and persuasively describes that just as Christ who is called the mediator because of his human nature brings us the divine grace to deliver us from spiritual death, so neither can we be delivered from bodily death except by resurrection brought by the divine power, and that the cause of our resurrection is in that of Christ himself.\textsuperscript{39}

Before moving on to the sixteenth century, let us look briefly at the official view of the Roman Catholic church on the doctrine. Since the resurrection of the body is one of the

\textsuperscript{34} Augustine, \textit{Enchiridion}, 88 and \textit{De civitate Dei}, 22.5, 20, 24.

\textsuperscript{35} Cf., for instance, with John Damascene’s more biblical and simpler approach to the doctrine in his \textit{De fide orthodoxa}, IV.27.

\textsuperscript{36} Aquinas, \textit{Summa contra gentiles}, IV.79-91.

\textsuperscript{37} Aquinas, \textit{Summa theologiae, supplementum}, q.75-86. This \textit{supplementum} was posthumously edited, and probably a commentary by Thomas himself on Peter Lombard’s \textit{Sententiæarum libri} IV.

\textsuperscript{38} Ex. Aquinas, \textit{Summa theologiae, suppl.}, q.76, art.2-3.

\textsuperscript{39} Aquinas, \textit{Summa theologiae, suppl.}, q.76, art.1.
ancient creedal articles,\textsuperscript{40} it is repeatedly confessed by other councils as well. Against the
dualistic view of the body, for instance, the eleventh council of Toledo (675) professed its
faith as follows:

\begin{quote}
We confess that, after the example of our Head, there will be a true \textit{resurrection of the body} of all the dead. We do not believe that we shall rise
again in some aerial body or any other body (as some foolishly maintain) but
in that in which we live, move and have our being.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

Moreover, in the fourth Lateran general council (1215), it is confessed that the resurrected
body is necessary to receive either perpetual punishment or eternal glory at the final
judgment according to works, good or bad, done in the very body on earth.\textsuperscript{42} Hence, it is
evident that the identity of the earthly and resurrected body and the integrity of the latter, as
well as the dignity of the body itself, have been defended in the church through the early
and middle ages.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the doctrine has always functioned as
a major force of hope or comfort in the popular piety because without assurance of
salvation it rather serves simply as an introduction to the eternal damnation. In fact, it is
the sixteenth century Reformers themselves who confessed that the final resurrection was

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{The Apostles’ Creed} in \textit{Enchiridion symbolorum: definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et
morum}, 34\textsuperscript{th} ed. Henricus Denzinger, Herder, 1967 (hereafter, indicated by DS), 30; \textit{the
Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creed} (DS 150), \textit{the Creed of Epiphanius} (DS 44), and \textit{the Athanasian Creed} (DS 76).

\textsuperscript{41} DS 540: “Hoc ergo exemplo Capitis nostri confitemur veram fieri resurrectionem carnis omnium
mortuorum. Nec in aërea vel qualibet alia carne (ut quidam delivant) surrecturos nos ceditimus, sed in ista,
quà vivimus, consistimus et movemur.” English translation can be found in Josef Neuner and Heinrich Roos,
\textit{The Teaching of the Catholic Church: As Contained in Her Documents} (The Mercier Press, 1967), 809.

\textsuperscript{42} DS 801.
\end{footnotes}
used to be an object of dreadfulness rather than hope. Therefore, it seems that even if the doctrine has been retained up to the late medieval period, it lost its original power of hope by which the early Christians fought their battles in the age of persecution.

6.2.2. Reformation

The doctrine of the resurrection of the body was never a controversial issue between Catholics and Protestants in the Reformation era as we can see in *Das Augsburger Konfession* (1530), the article XVII in particular, and its *Apologia* (1531) which simply reports that the Roman Catholics accept the article without exception. While this official Lutheran faith, prepared principally by Melanchthon, reflects the faith of Luther on the one hand, it also seems that those two are not necessarily same.

In *Der Kleine Katechismus* (1529), Luther mentions the doctrine with other articles of the Apostles’ Creed, saying quite briefly that “on the last day he [Christ] will raise me and all the dead and will give eternal life to me and to all who believe in Christ.”

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43 See, for example, Luther’s *Commentary to the first Corinthians* 15:22 (WA36:552-554) and Calvin’s *Responsio ad Sadoletum* (*OS* 1:484). Cf. Sadolet’s teaching of the resurrection (*OS* 1:445).


45 *Das Augsburger Konfession*, art. XVII: “Item docent, quod Christus apparebit in consummatione mundi ad judicandum, et motuos omnes resuscitabit, piis et electis dabat vitam aeternam et perpetua gaudia, impios autem hominess ac diabolos condemnabit, ut sine fine crucientur.” The text is followed by condemnations for the heretic views of the Anabaptists and the Jews. According to Theodor Kolde, a sentence in the original text of the *Konfession*, which read “das alle verstorbene menschen mit demselben irem leib, darin sy gestorben, widerum werden auferweckt werden zu dem gericht Christi…” was erased probably to avoid an unnecessary debate. See, *Die älteste Redaktion der Augsburger Konfession* (Gütersloh, 1906), 53-55.

46 “Auch wird gelehret…, daß vor der Auferstehung der Toten eitel Heilige, Fromme ein weltlich Reich haben und alle Gottlosen vertilgen werden.”

47 “am Jüngsten Tage mich und alle Toten auferwecken wird und mir samt allen Gläubigen in Christus ein ewiges Leben geben wird.” I will put pagination and paragraph number of *The Book of Concord*:
significant here is that Luther deals with the doctrine in the context of the third article of the Creed, that is the belief in the Holy Spirit, and subtitles it “sanctification.” For him, the doctrine of resurrection is related to the other doctrines of “the forgiveness of sins” and “the life everlasting” all of which shall be brought only to the godly. This faith is more elaborately stated in *Der Große Katechismus* (1529) as follows:

> Meanwhile, however, since holiness has begun and increases daily, we wait for that our flesh will be put to death and will be buried with all its uncleanness, and will come out gloriously and arise to complete and perfect holiness in a new, eternal life. ...[In that life]there will be only perfectly pure and holy people, full of godliness and righteousness, completely freed from sin, death, and all misfortune, living in new, immortal, and glorified bodies.

Here, the bodily resurrection presupposes “spiritual resurrection”. The notion of spiritual resurrection is apparently Pauline. Even if this specific understanding of the resurrection is

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48 “Der dritte artikel: Von der heiligung.”


50 Cf. *Der Große Katechismus* (Baptism/ *Book of Concord*, 444.65), *Apologia IV* (Justification/ ibid., 143.250), and XII (Penitence/ ibid.188.46).
not a full exposition of the doctrine,\textsuperscript{51} Luther’s rediscovery, as it were, of the gospel in the doctrine is a significant contribution to its history and not a “failure.”\textsuperscript{52}

Although Luther himself has paid less attention to the issue of identity and integrity of the resurrected body,\textsuperscript{53} his followers discussed it later in \textit{Formula of Concord} (1577). In the context of arguing original sin and its influence on human nature, the text defends the identity but sinlessness of the resurrected body, as much as soul.\textsuperscript{54} Although this discussion might be significant for the study of Protestant orthodoxy, to inquire it further would carry us too far. A few more remarks, instead, should be made before turning to our own Reformer’s view on the resurrection.

The fact that the doctrine was not controversial in the sixteenth century does not necessarily mean that every approach to or understanding of the doctrine was the same. Let us take Hubmaier, one of the early and influential leaders of the Anabaptist movement, for example. He mentions the double resurrection, that is resurrection of the godly and of the ungodly, in his catechism (1527), and yet his description of the last day is mostly based on the account of I Thessalonians 4:15-17.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{51} Torrance, \textit{Kingdom and Church}, 53.

\textsuperscript{52} Against Torrance’s view in \textit{Kingdom and Church}, 53. A more elaborated discussion on this aspect of the resurrection can be found in Menno Simons’ \textit{The Spiritual Resurrection}. See, \textit{The Complete Writings of Menno Simons} (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1956), 51-62.

\textsuperscript{53} Cf. \textit{Der Große Katechismus} (the third article/ \textit{Book of Concord}, 418.60).

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration}, art. 1 (Original sin/ \textit{Book of Concord}, 516.46-47).

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{Eine christliche Lehrtafel} (1526), in \textit{Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte} Bd. 29 (1962), \textit{Schriften}, 325, “Leon: Du sagst vom Jungsten tag, was ist der Jungst tag. Hans: Es ist der tag auff wöhlen der Herr kummen wirdt mit einem fellgeschray vnd stym des ertzengels, vnd mit der pusunnen Gottes hernider kummen von himel, vnd die todten in Christo werden auffersteen zu erst, das ist: es wird leib, seel vnd geyst zu sammen kummen, dernach wir, die wir leben vnd vberbleyben, werden zu gleich mit den selbigen hingezuckt werden in den wolcken, dem herren entgegen in den lufft, vnd werden also sein bey dem
In the book ten of his *Summa*, Bullinger treats issues of “death and the end of all things.” His handling of the doctrine is historical, systematic, and pastoral. It comprises so-called individual and general eschatology. Although the treatise has a medieval outlook in its subjects, the content is unmistakably evangelical and, most of all, biblical. Especially, herren allzeit in dem ewigen lebenn. Ja, die wol gewürckt haben. Wölhe aber vbel gewürckt haben, werden herfür geen zur auferstehung des gerichts. 1. Thess. 4 [V.13ff.], Joan. 5.c. [V.29].”


Bullinger, *Common Places*, Book 10. The followings are marginal notes and subheadings of it (spellings of the text are modernized):

Ch. 1 Of death and that we ought at all times to have death before their eyes: What the Scriptures do teach as concerning death/ Two kinds of death/ Spiritual death/ A corporal and natural death/ That souls are immortal/ That bodily death is an punishment of sin/ No man can escape death/ That we ought always to have death before our eyes/ Why the hour of death is uncertain.

Ch. 2 After what sort a man should prepare himself, that he may depart happily out of this life: Preparation to die must not be put of unto the last point/ Men must take order beforehand for their matters/ We must in time prepare ourselves to die/ All things must be forsaken for god his sake/ How the sick person obtains the favor of God/ We must confess ourselves unto the true priest/ How sinners in the Gospel are delivered from sin, and from the punishment of sin/ A Steadfast faith/ God must be called upon/ Of calling of the ministers unto them that are sick, and of anointing of them/ We must forgive our neighbor/ Patience/ They that lie on dying must consider the example of Christ.

Ch. 3 That the faithful do assuredly (after the departure out of this life) go straight into everlasting felicity: That the faithful are not purged in the fire of purgatory/ The articles of our belief do overthrow purgatory/ That the forgiveness of sins is the new testament/ Of the Salvation of our forefathers/ That we are purged only by the blood and passion of Christ/ The imperfectness of our faith is made perfect by the grace of God/ The doctrine of the Gospel as concerning eternal life.

Ch. 4 That all things subject unto corruption shall perish, and that the end of all things does approach: That all things shall be consumed, and that the end of/ That the judgment and end of the world shall certainly come.

Ch. 5 That the tokens which are said should go before the judgment are finished, and that therefore the faithful do worthily watch: That the tokens of the judgment and end of things are diligently to be marked/ False Christs and their miracles/ False Prophets/ To fall from the Scriptures into the doctrines of men/ To fall from the faith and to forbid those things which God has permitted/ Of the coming of antichrist/ That the last ages shall be wicked and exceeding ungodly/ Of the end of the world and after what sort the end of all things shall be.
chapters 4 and 5 of the book heavily depend on the apocalyptic writings in the Scriptures. 58

Despite Bullinger’s lengthy discussion of the last things in general, his treatment of the resurrection of the dead is rather short. He just mentions the final resurrection at the last judgment in the way Scripture describes. 59

It is Melanchthon, a systematizer of Lutheran teachings, who considered the doctrine of the resurrection as a theological locus or topic. As we have seen, Melanchthon has already discussed the issue of last things (“the return of Christ for Judgment”) independently in an article of Das Augsburger Konfession of 1530. 60 It is, however, in the second Latin edition of Loci communes (1535) that “the resurrection of the dead” appeared as a topic for the first time. 61 According to Melanchthon, the article of eternal life and resurrection of the dead is a distinguished article of the gospel. 62 His discussion on the doctrine is interesting. First, the whole section consists mostly of the Old Testament passages 63 and their expositions, with a few references of the New Testament. 64 Secondly, the issues discussed under the topic of “the resurrection of the dead” are the present

58 Bullinger, Common Places, X.4-5. We should remember that Bullinger preached on both the book of Daniel and Revelation and wrote a commentary on the former.

59 Bullinger, Common Places, X.5.

60 Art.17. See, above.

61 OM 21:524-528. Cf. ch.3 (1539 Inst.). The topic appears in the third Latin edition as well (OM 21:925-929). Although Melanchthon adds a paragraph in the beginning of the section, the rest of it is mostly the same as the second edition.


64 Matt. 25:46, John 5, 6:40, 1 Cor. 15.
tribulation and hiddenness of the Church, her eternal joy in the last day, the eternal damnation of the ungodly, and the kingdom of Christ. In other words, the topical title does not always reflect its content in a narrow sense; it rather embraces various teachings related to the topic.

With these backgrounds in mind, let us now consider Calvin’s view of the doctrine of the final resurrection.

6.3. Calvin’s View of the Doctrine in His Institutes

6.3.1. The 1551 Institutes

After the development of Calvin’s discussion on the doctrine in the early editions of the Institutes, the next major addition to the section took place in the 1551 French version of the 1550 Latin Institutes. As the editors of Opera Selecta point out, this additional material comes for the most part from Calvin’s correspondences with Lelio Sozzini or Laelius Socinus in 1549. In response to Sozzini’s question about the resurrection of the body, Calvin writes that although it is not difficult at all for him to deal with it, it simply

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67 See, above, 3.2.2.b.


69 “Colligendi enim et accurate explicandi essent plurimi scripturae loci qui ad eam rem pertinent, si argumentum penitus ex cuiusdem suspicarum.” CO 13:272-274 (n.1191); 307-311 (n.1212); 336-340 (n.1231); and 484-487 (n.1323). For English translation, see “Four letters from the Socinus- Calvin Correspondence (1549),” tr. Ralph Lazzaro, in Italian Reformation Studies in Honor of Laelius Socinus, ed. John A. Tedeschi (Firenze: Felice le Monnier, 1965), 215-230. Yet, according to the footnotes by the translator, it seems difficult to know exactly what Socinus’ questions were only from Calvin’s response (Ibid., 221, n.328). For the controversy with Socinus, see, also, Williams, The Radical Reformation, 569 and Friedrich Trechsel, Die Protestantischen Antitrinitarier, II, Beitrage VII:445f.
requires more time and effort because “a number of scriptural passages in regard to that would have to be gathered and carefully explicated, if I were to undertake a thoroughly examined argument.”\textsuperscript{70}

In other words, it was not difficult for Calvin who had already written \textit{Psychopannychia} as well as \textit{Institutes} and \textit{Catechism} to argue over the issue, and yet he realized on the other hand that “a thorough discussion” for gathering and interpreting many biblical passages was necessary. Instead of a long argument (this was impossible in a letter), Calvin sent back a brief but condensed reply to the question with citing a number of scriptural texts, mostly Pauline, and Tertullian to defend the bodily resurrection and its identity with the present body. This Calvin’s letter was paraphrased, a little expanded, and eventually incorporated into the French edition of the \textit{Institutes} in 1551.

\textit{6.3.2. The 1559 Institutes}

The final Latin edition of the \textit{Institutes} was thoroughly revised particularly in its structure, merging the older structures, notably the structure drawn from Romans, with a fourfold creedal model. The placement of the doctrine of the resurrection still reflects the order of Romans. According to the letter to the readers of the final edition, Calvin seems to be satisfied at last with the arrangement of description.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{70} CO 13:309.

\textsuperscript{71} OS 3:5. Cf. Richard A. Muller, \textit{The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition} (Oxford, 2000), 132-136. Obviously, however, it is not the Creedal order in exact because the chapter on the final resurrection, for instance, does not come to the last.
One of the most important differences in the last edition from former editions, in terms of the doctrine of the final resurrection, is that Calvin no longer discusses it in the framework of the exposition of the Creed but established an independent chapter for the topic, and located it at the end of the book three of the treatise following the discussion of predestination. In this formation of a new chapter, it is probable that Calvin followed, again, Melanchthon’s *Loci communes*, especially its second or third edition that has a locus of “the resurrection of the dead.” However, a question arises: why then did Calvin wait until 1559 to develop the locus? As far as the present doctrine is concerned, therefore, it seems closer to the truth to say that the chapter was organized as a result of various complicated processes as we have seen above. As for the location in the *Institutes*, the order of predestination-resurrection seems to be logically reasonable because the latter deals with the fate of the elect and the reprobate, and thus the chapter fits as a conclusion of “the way how the grace of Christ will be received,” i.e., retaining the structure of Romans --- predestination (ch. 9), resurrection (ch. 11), and magistrate (ch. 13).

Major developments of the discussion in the 1559 *Institutes* are as follows. First, Calvin describes the present situation of the believers who suffer and struggle in this world in spite of the fact that they have obtained Christ’s victory and promise to enter the heaven.

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72 In fact, Calvin dissolved that section, and transferred each used discussion into various parts of the treatise though the order itself is still retained in large sense.

73 *Inst.* (1559), III.xxv.

74 OM 21:524-528 and 925-930.


76 See, n.1. “De modo percipiendae Christi gratiae, et qui inde fructus nobis proveniant, et qui effectus consequantur.”
Then, he encourages them to study or meditate on the doctrine of the final resurrection by saying that “only the person has firmly profited in the gospel who has accustomed oneself to continual meditation upon the blessed resurrection,” and even that such a person alone can receive the fruit of Christ’s benefits.

Secondly, Calvin is not unaware of the wider perspective of the doctrine, that is, the redemption of the created world as well as Christ’s final coming. Nevertheless, unlike Melanchthon, since the topic of this chapter is not the last things in general but “the final resurrection,” he does not pursue other subjects under this topic.

Thirdly, Calvin repeats more clearly the main points of the Christian resurrection argued in *Psychopannychia* and other works: Christ’s resurrection as the pledge of our own resurrection; God’s omnipotence as a foundation to the belief of the resurrection of the body following the ancient fathers; and citations from various Old Testament passages illustrating the wonder and power of God by which the saints will be raised.

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77 “Quare ille demum solide in Evangelio profecit qui ad continuam beatae resurrectionis meditationem assuefactus est” (III.xxv.1 / OS 4:433). Obviously, this initial part reflects the chapter of “the Christian life” (III.ix).

78 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.2. It is noticeable that Calvin considered the chapter as a conclusion to the book three.

79 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.2.

80 Cf. with the discussion in II.xvi.17-19.

81 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.3. Interestingly, he also provides an argument about questions concerned with the resurrection story of Christ related in the Gospels, that seems somewhat out of place.

82 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.3.

83 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.4. Cf. the chapter on “the relationship between the Old and the New Testaments” (II.x.7-23).
Finally, whereas Calvin’s refutation of the Scholastics who ask “harmful” questions about unknown matters is apparent in his discussion,\(^{84}\) it seems that he has also learned from them in terms of issues around the topic. Having stated the doctrine positively at first, Calvin then argues such questions as chiliasm,\(^ {85}\) immortality and intermediate state of the soul,\(^ {86}\) the resurrected body and its identity with the present one,\(^ {87}\) the manner of resurrection,\(^ {88}\) the resurrection of the ungodly,\(^ {89}\) the eternal happiness of the elect,\(^ {90}\) other minor questions,\(^ {91}\) and the lot of the reprobate,\(^ {92}\) in order. Materially, most of these discussions are not new. They are from the 1539 *Institutes,\(^ {93}\) though reorganized and expanded, *Psychopannychia,\(^ {94}\) Calvin’s letters,\(^ {95}\) as well as other minor sources.\(^ {96}\) As far as the selection of the subjects and the order of the argument is concerned, however, they

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\(^{84}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.6, 10, and 11.

\(^{85}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.5.

\(^{86}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.6.

\(^{87}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.7, 8.

\(^{88}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.8.

\(^{89}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.9.

\(^{90}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.10.

\(^{91}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.11.

\(^{92}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.12.

\(^{93}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.8, 9, 10, 12.

\(^{94}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.6.

\(^{95}\) *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.7, 8. See, above.

\(^{96}\) Ex. The apologetic writings against the Anabaptists (*Briève instructon pour armer tous bons fidèles contre les erreurs de la secte commune des anabaptistes* in 1544) and the Libertines(*Contre la secte phantastique et furieuse des libertins, qui se nomment spirituelz* in 1545). See, ch.4.
rather seem Scholastic or more textbook-like. In fact, while Calvin says the he ought to
guard against contributing to the levity of others by answering them, he does answer some
of such superfluous questions. In other words, Calvin’s discussion on the final
resurrection in the 1559 *Institutes* is materially a summation of his earlier discussions,
topically Melanchthonian, and structurally Scholastic.

6.4. The Final Resurrection in Calvin’s Biblical Commentaries

The discussion in the 1559 *Institutes* on the topic of the final resurrection is not only
the sum of Calvin’s earlier theological writings but also of his biblical commentaries. One
of the most significant differences between the previous editions of the *Institutes* and the
last one is the fact that most of his biblical commentaries and lectures had been published
before 1559. Although we have seen and will see various facets of Calvin’s eschatology in
his biblical commentaries, it might be meaningful here to look at the relationship between
the last edition of the *Institutes* and commentaries particularly in terms of the doctrine of
the final resurrection.

In fact, it is not so hard to realize that similar notions of the discussion in the
*Institutes* have already appeared in his biblical commentaries. The final resurrection is

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97 Cf., for example, with Aquinas’ *Summa theologiae*, suppl., q.69-86:
Q.69 (Of the place where souls are received after death).
Q.70 (Of the quality of the soul after leaving the body)....
Q.75 (Of the resurrection itself).
Q.76 (Of the cause of the resurrection).
Q.77 (Of the time and manner of the resurrection)....
Q.79 (Of the identity of those who rise again).
Q.80 (Of the integrity of the bodies in the resurrection)....
Q.82 (Of the impassibility of the bodies of the blessed)....
Q.86 (Of the conditions of the damned after the resurrection).

98 *Inst* (1559), III.xxv.11.
truly our hope and comfort.\textsuperscript{99} Without it, the Gospel is nothing\textsuperscript{100} because it completes our salvation.\textsuperscript{101} This doctrine, however, is difficult to believe\textsuperscript{102} unless our eyes are directed to Christ’s resurrection, that is the pledge or foundation of our resurrection,\textsuperscript{103} and God’s power.\textsuperscript{104} Calvin also refers to burial rite as a symbol of the final resurrection,\textsuperscript{105} and discusses on the issue of soul sleep.\textsuperscript{106} As the Scriptures clearly state, the resurrection will occur not only for believers but for the ungodly as well.\textsuperscript{107}

In sum, most of the Calvin’s arguments in the Institutes comprise teachings which he has already discussed in his biblical commentaries. Although Calvin is more careful of their historical-literal context in the case of commentaries,\textsuperscript{108} once he elicits the teachings from the texts, he take them for granted as his hermeneutical basis, and thus theological foundation.

\textsuperscript{99} Comm. Ps. 49:15, Isa. 14:19; Acts 24:16; Rom. 8:11, 19; 2 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 4:13, 18; 2 Thess. 1:10. See, also, Serm. Deut. 1:22-28 (E.T., 35.a.50).

\textsuperscript{100} Comm. 2 Peter 3:4.

\textsuperscript{101} Comm. 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 49.

\textsuperscript{102} Comm. Matt. 22:29; Acts 10:39, 41, 26: 8; 1 Cor. 15:35; Phil. 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:15.

\textsuperscript{103} Comm. Ps. 78:39; Acts 1:21; Rom. 6:5; 1 Cor. 15:12, 13, 21; 1 Thess. 4:14; 2 Thess. 1:10. See, also, Serm. Deut. 21:22-23 (E.T. 765.a.50), 30:11-14 (1064.a.30).

\textsuperscript{104} Comm. Dan. 12:2; Hos. 13:14; Matt. 22:29; John 2:19, 3:7; Acts 26:8; Rom. 4:17, 6:4, 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:36; Phil. 3:21. See, also, Serm. Job 7:7-15.


\textsuperscript{106} Comm. Matt. 22:23ff; 1 Cor. 15:18, 19.

\textsuperscript{107} See, Dan. 12:2, Acts 24:15, John 5:29, and Calvin’s commentaries on those texts.

\textsuperscript{108} Calvin pays more attention to whether or not the text deals with the issue of the “final” resurrection. Ex. Comm. Ps. 17:15; Isa. 26:14, 19; Rom. 6:10, 8:11.
6.5. Other Revisions and Additions in the 1559 *Institutes*

Before moving on to the next chapter, it is worth taking a glance at revisions or additions in the last edition of the *Institutes* made on other concerned subjects.

6.5.1. *On the Soul* (I.xv.2)

While Calvin gave a brief overview of both philosophical and biblical idea of the human soul in *Psychopannychia*, he now adds a new section to the discussion of the human nature describing quite confidently on the biblical view of ‘soul.’ Instead of exposing a variety of ideas of “secular writers,” he shows the diversity of biblical usage of the term by the sacred writers with many references to the texts of the Scriptures. This section is obviously based on the exegetical results done by a more matured expositor than the one at the time when *Psychopannychia* was written, though his conviction of immortality of soul is same.\(^{109}\)

6.5.2. *On Christ’s Kingly Office* (II.xv.3-5)

The discussion on Christ’s threefold (prophetic, kingly, and priestly) office, first appeared in the 1539 *Institutes*, is now fully revised. Especially the section of the kingly office is unequally expanded. Calvin intensively argues for the spiritual character of it by which “the perpetuity of the church” is secure.\(^{110}\) That eternity, however, does not occur on

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\(^{109}\) OS 3:174-176.

\(^{110}\) II.xv.3 (OS 3:475).
the earth, but rather inspire us to hope for blessed immortality\textsuperscript{111} because our happiness belongs to the heavenly life.\textsuperscript{112} The whole added discussion, particularly the repetitive use of the notion of “Kingdom of Christ,”\textsuperscript{113} unmistakably reminds us of Calvin’s lectures on the prophetic books in the Old Testament.\textsuperscript{114}

6.5.3. On the Christian Life (III.vi-x)

It is in this final edition of the Institutes that Calvin removed the section of the Christian life from the end of the treatise into the context of repentance or regeneration in the book three.\textsuperscript{115} Hence, as a result, the chapter of the Christian life serves relatively more as a direction for the believers in the present life, whereas that of the final resurrection appears as the eschatological culmination of Christ’s grace.

Nonetheless, for Calvin, “the beginning of right living is spiritual in which the inner feeling of the mind is sincerely dedicated to God.”\textsuperscript{116} Therefore, Meditatio futurae vitae is even considered elsewhere as the purpose of the human creation.\textsuperscript{117} This probably is an outcome of Calvin’s exegesis on the book of Genesis.\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{111} II.xv.3 (OS 3:475).
\textsuperscript{112} II.xv.4 (OS 3:475).
\textsuperscript{113} II.xv.4-5.
\textsuperscript{114} See, the next chapter.
\textsuperscript{115} Calvin almost identified repentance with regeneration. See, e.g., Inst (1559), III.iii.9. On the relationship between the Christian life and regeneration, he has already discussed in the section of penitence and regeneration of his 1537 Catechism (OS 1:394-395).
\textsuperscript{116} Inst (1559), III.vi.5: “acsi diceretur spirituale esse recte vivendi principium, ubi interior animi affectus sine fictione ad sanctitatem et iustitiam colendam Deo addicitur” (OS 4:150).
\textsuperscript{117} Inst (1559). I.xv.6: “ad caelestis vitae meditationem conditus fuit homo” (OS 1:183).
6.5.4. On the Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer (III.xx.42)

The section was totally revised from the text of the first edition of the *Institutes* though not so much expanded. Although there is little changed in substance, the spiritual character of the Kingdom is more emphasized. Hence, it is said that “God reigns where men, both by denial of themselves and by contempt of the world and earthly life, assign themselves to his righteousness so that they might aspire to a heavenly life,” and that this prayer ought both “to kindle zeal for mortification of the flesh” and “to instruct us in bearing the cross.” These additions are, needless to say, based upon the discussion of the Christian life.

There are also minor, yet no less important, changes (indicated by parenthesis) and additions in the text as follows: in this prayer we pray that God gather “churches” (> believers), establish “a lawful order,” and cast down “all enemies of pure teaching and religion”; the fullness of the Kingdom is delayed until “the final coming of Christ (> the

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121 Cf. *Inst* (1559), III.xx.42:


revelation of his judgment)\textsuperscript{124}, and at last he destroys “Antichrist” (> Satan’s kingdom).\textsuperscript{125}

It is likely that these expressions are reflections of Calvin’s exegesis especially upon the Old Testaments prophets and other concerned texts in the New Testament as well.

6.6. Conclusions

1. Generally speaking, the Reformers devoted little space to formal discussions of the bodily resurrection, though many discussed the spiritual one. This is probably because the former was neither a controversial issue nor a popular concern in their age. Calvin was, thus, one significant exception who fully argued about it.

2. It seems that Psychopannychia played a crucial role in the later formation of Calvin’s eschatology in general, and his view of the final resurrection in particular. His basic perspective, as well as materials for discussion, has already appeared in the treatise. It means in turn that the young Reformer owed his view of the doctrine much to the basic texts of the Scriptures and patristic teachings. And this may be the reason why Calvin could develop extensively his argument in the Institutes because the resurrection belief based on the divine power and Christ’s resurrection was one of the main concerns among early fathers, and thus became the foundation for the evangelistic theology which brought people hope.

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3. The doctrine of the final resurrection is regarded as a culmination of Christ’s salvation in the 1559 Institutes. This does not mean, of course, that this doctrine summarizes the full content of Calvin’s eschatology. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Calvin also focused on other related issues such as the second coming of Christ, Kingdom of God, the final judgment, and the final restoration of the natural world, and discusses in depth in his biblical commentaries.

4. One of the most remarkable things we can see in additions or revisions of the last edition of the Institutes is that, as Calvin himself implied in the preface to the second edition of the Institutes,\textsuperscript{126} they are by and large outcomes of Calvin’s exegetical work of the Scriptures accomplished by the time.

\textsuperscript{126} See, above, 3.1.1.
CHAPTER 7

ESCHATOLOGY AS A VISION: COMMENTARIES ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

PROPHETS

7.1. Introduction

While Calvin kept sending letters and dedicating his works to many governing authorities, the first and most famous one was the letter to the King Francis I of France attached to his very first Institutes in 1536. In this letter, Calvin defends the legitimacy of the evangelical movement into which he has now joined, as follows:

It will then be for you, most serene King, not to turn away your ears or your mind from such just defense, especially when a very great thing is concerned: how God’s glory may be kept safe on earth, how God’s truth may retain its dignity, how Christ’s Kingdom may be restored and defended among us…. Indeed, this consideration makes a true king: to recognize himself a minister of God in the administration of the kingdom…. Furthermore, he is deceived who expects lasting prosperity of his kingdom when it is not ruled by God’s scepter, that is, his sacred word; for the heavenly oracle that proclaims that “where prophecy fails the people are dispersed” cannot lie.

The assertion that restoring and making progress of the “kingdom of Christ” is the mission of the evangelicals appears in many places in Calvin’s writings. In other words, this is the reformatio in total sense at which Calvin and his colleagues aimed.

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1 Praefatio ad christianissimum regem Franciae qua hic ei liber pro confessione fidei offertur.

2 “Tuum autem erit, Serenissime Rex, nec aures, nec animum a tam iusto patrocinio avertere, praesertim ubi de re tanta agitur, nempe quomodo Dei gloriae sua constet in terris incolumitas, quomodo suam dignitatem Dei veritas retineat, quomodo regnum Christo sartum tectumque inter nos maneant…. Siquidem et verum regem haec cogitatio facit: agnoscerе se in regni administratione Dei ministrum…. Porro fallitur, qui diuturnam prosperitatem exspectat eius regni, quod Dei sceptro, hoc est, sancto eius verbo non regitur, quando coeleste oraculum excidere non potest, quo edictum est: dissipatum iri populum, ubi defecerit prophetia (Prov. 29)” (OS 1:23).
In this last chapter, we will explore Calvin’s eschatological vision in terms of “kingdom of Christ,” unfolded particularly in his commentaries on the Old Testament prophets.

7.2. Historical Overview of the Term “Kingdom of Christ”

7.2.1. Augustine

Although the term “kingdom of Christ” is primarily a biblical expression indicating the kingly reign of the risen and ascended Christ, and thus has been frequently referred throughout the Christian history, it is likely once again Augustine who characterized its basic terminology especially of the sixteenth century reformers.

In the twentieth book of his De civitate Dei, Augustine repeatedly states that the church is now already the kingdom of Christ because, as Colossians 1:12-13 clearly says, we are brought into the reign of Christ. On the other hand, however, he never perfectly indentifies the earthly church with the heavenly one either, because the two cities (civitatis),

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3 See above, for example, discussions on the dedicatory epistles of the commentaries on Hebrews and Acts to Kings of Poland (CO 13:281-286) and Denmark (CO 14:292-296) respectively.


5 Ex. Eph. 5:5 “…non obtinebit haereditatem in regno Christi et Dei” and Col. 1:13 “[pater] Qui eripuit nos ex potestate tenebrarum, et transtulit in regnum Filii sui dilecti” in Calvin’s own translation (italics mine).

6 Augustine, De civitate Dei, 20:9, “Ergo et nunc Ecclesia regnum Christi est regnumque caelorum.” Other references to the term in the same treatise are 20:7, 13, 21:16, 24, 26, 27, 22:12, 29 et al.

lovers and enemies of God, are intermixed in this world until the last judgment.\textsuperscript{8} The kingdom of God, therefore, is a pilgrim on the earth. Whereas Augustine draws the sharp line between the Roman society and the church, he neither deny the secular power itself like the Manicheans nor fall in the dualism radically differentiating it from the sacred one. He rather insisted of the superiority of the church over the state in its virtues though the latter is not without them, too, yet only in relative sense.\textsuperscript{9} The earthly city, an image of the heavenly one, is supposed to signify and serve the latter.\textsuperscript{10}

7.2.2. Luther

Although this Augustinian tradition, at least its basic framework, had been retained through the Middle Ages, the sixteenth century reformers seem to put more emphasis on the distinction between the secular power and the spiritual one, severely criticizing the medieval church which has often mixed them intentionally or unintentionally. Luther’s so-called two kingdoms theory is the first and foremost model.\textsuperscript{11}

Yet, this teaching appears not so simple as generally conceived. According to Steinmetz,\textsuperscript{12} it is a teaching consisting of concepts of “two kingdoms/ Zwei-Reiche-Lehre”

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{9} Augustine, \textit{De civitate Dei}, 15:4.
  \item \textsuperscript{10} Augustine, \textit{De civitate Dei}, 15:2. Cf. also, \textit{Epistla}, 138:2(14), 105:3(11) et al.
  \item \textsuperscript{11} His typical idea can be found especially in his \textit{Von weltlicher Obrigkeit, vieweit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig sei} (1523, WA 11:245-280).
\end{itemize}
and “two governments/ Zwei-Regimene-Lehre.” Two kingdoms are two ways of being of a believer in this world, indicating the twofold reality of the one who lives in front of God and belongs to the human society simultaneously. Two governments, on the other hand, are two forms of God’s reign to the world: the rule by the Gospel in the church and the rule by the secular law. These concepts are overlapped each other, and yet must be distinguished. Among them, the rule by the Gospel implies the faith and the spiritual life or the forgiveness of sins by means of his words, accomplished by Christ. In other words, as long as it exists on earth, the kingdom of Christ is the reign by his words within the heart of the believer. Therefore, the church as a divine government never exercises any compulsive power since it is a community of freedom and love based on the Gospel. On the contrary, the state must be ruled by natural law and human reason in order to restrain the vices of human sins; nonetheless, it is also God’s government. God rules this world employing these two devises.

According to Luther, Christians may or even should participate in the politics of this secular world to exercise Christian ethics as seen in the Sermons on the Mount because the state is also the place for Christians to serve God through free act of love for neighbors. That does not necessarily mean that every governor must be a Christian. Luther thinks that

13 Luther, Von weltlicher Obrigkeit, pt.1 (E.T., III-IV for convenience).
14 Steinmetz, “Two kingdoms,” 115.
15 Steinmetz, “Two kingdoms,” 122.
there is a reason or law of their own for the politics, which would be fine as long as it has justice, though he also insists that preachers should preach the governors the word of God.  

Luther’s two kingdom theory is, therefore, not a teaching of, as often misunderstood, dividing the faith and life dualistically or ignoring the Christian perspective of the social ethics and the politics. For him, the vertical relationship with God is undividedly connected to the horizontal relationship with neighbors.

7.2.3. Melanchthon

Luther’s idea of the church as a realization of Christ’s spiritual government is clearly stated in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (1531) by his colleague, Melanchthon. In the article on the church, Melanchthon describes that the kingdom of Christ is righteousness of heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church is the kingdom of Christ, or to put it in other words, the gathering of the saints. Although the kingdom of Christ must be distinguished from that of Satan, the wicked is still mixed among the former on earth for it is not apparently revealed yet. Nevertheless, those whom Christ has

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21 Apologie, VII & VIII:16.

22 Apologie, VII & VIII:16. The same definition can be seen in XVI:2 as well.

23 Apologie, VII & VIII:17.
vivified through his spirit are perpetually the kingdom of Christ, unchangeable whether it is hidden under the cross or revealed.  

Melanchthon also considers the “kingdom of Christ” as one of the theological topics in the second Latin edition and followings of his *Loci communes*. He there intensely defends the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ against both the view of the church and the earthly interpretation of the Old Testament prophecies by the Anabaptists and the Jews.  

7.2.4. Bucer

It is another Martin, an outstanding reformer in Strasburg, who has thoroughly deliberated over the kingdom of Christ and developed his own view of it though notwithout Luther’s influence. In his relatively small treatise on the cure of soul in 1538, for example, while he virtually identifies the kingdom of Christ with his church as the community of the believers, he also insists of its eschatological aspect.  

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27 *MBDS*, 7:105, “am reich Christi, das ist, an der Kirchen Christi.” Cf. ibid., 7:93, 98, and 139.  
28 Bucer intensifies that Christians pray for “die von hertzen umb zukunfft des reichs Christi” (*MBDS*, 7:94) and eagerly hope for the “uffgang des reichs Christi” (ibid., 203). He, on the other hand, criticizes elsewhere those fellows of Münster who consider the kingdom of Christ as an earthly matter. See, *Ein Summarischer vergriff der Christlichen lehre und Religion* (1548), 29 (*MBDS*, 17:141).
Among others, the most significant work to know Bucer’s view of the kingdom of Christ is without doubt the one which has the term in question as its title, namely, *De regno Christi*.\(^{29}\) It was dedicated to King Edward VI a year before Bucer died in England in 1551, hoping the king truly reform his country into the kingdom of Christ. The treatise, thus, is a kind of Bucer’s will, as it were. In fact, it is the zenith of all his works presenting extensively his profound knowledge and the measurement of his perspective. Especially in regard to the “kingdom of Christ,” he provides an analysis of biblical usage of the term and its historical overview through post-Constantine ages up to the recent situation in the sixteenth century.

First, Bucer clarifies the biblical foundation of the phrase through the exegesis on texts such as Colossians 1:13, like Augustine, and maintains that the “kingdom of Christ” is fundamentally identical with the “kingdom of God” for the Son and the Father are *homoousios*.\(^{30}\) Because the kingdom of Christ is that of the crucified, the Son establishes it not by worldly powers but by his word and spirit through his apostles and servants.\(^{31}\) Yet, it is also true that all the true kings in the world have shown their enthusiasm for the kingdom of Christ.\(^{32}\) The contemporary situation of the kingdom in Bucer’s age, in contrast, is still “fluctuating and uncertain (varium et incertum)” in his judgment though it

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\(^{30}\) *De regno Christi*, I:1 (Wendel, 4). This is a traditional understanding since Ambrosius whose view was defended against the Arians. See, Ambrosius, *De fide*, CSEL 78/8, 271-272 (n.153) “Sed in fili regno et pater regnat et in regno patris filius regnat, quia ‘pater in filio et in patre filius’…. Ergo in uno regno unitas patestatis est. Nemo sgitur divinitatem inter patrem et filium secernat.”

\(^{31}\) *De regno Christi*, I:1 (Wendel, 6). Cf. *De regno Christi*, I:3 (Wendel, 34-35) where Bucer describes eight spiritual characteristics of the kingdom of Christ according to Isaiah 61:1-6.

\(^{32}\) *De regno Christi*, I:2 (Wendel, 17). He names David, Hezekiah, and Josiah in the Old Testament; Constantine, Jovianus, and Theodosius in the New Testament era.
has made a certain progress. In chapter 5, Bucer writes on the work of the restoration (restitutio) of the kingdom of Christ, as follows:

The Kingdom of our Savior Jesus Christ is that administration and management of the eternal salvation of God’s elect, by which this very Lord and king of heaven by his doctrine and discipline, administered by suitable ministers chosen for this very purpose, gathers to himself his elect, who dispersed throughout the world and whom he nonetheless wills to be subject to the powers of the world, and incorporates them into himself and his Church and thus governs them in it so that they be purged more fully day by day from sins, and that live well and happily and in future as well.

In other words, for Bucer, the kingdom of Christ is primarily Christ’s kingly rule in this world for the elect through the administration of the church moving toward future.

Further, according to Bucer, the duty of the governors of this world is to explore God’s will for the citizen’s life and encourage them to the Gospel; the citizen including pastors and teachers, on the other hand, is to be obedient to the governing authorities to whom the Lord commits the power of sword. In his conclusive part, thus, Bucer urges the all the governors to restore the “kingdom of Christ” for their people not only in the matter of faith but also in every aspect of their lives, in accordance with the purpose of Christ who is the ultimate king. To the critics who consider his view just as a dream, Bucer asks instead if his description is based upon the Scriptures.

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33 De regno Christi, I:4 (Wendel, 40).

34 De regno Christi, I:5 (Wendel, 54), “Regnum seruatoris nostri Iesu Christi administratio est et procuratio salutis aeternae electorum Dei, qua hic ipse Dominus et rex coelorum, doctrina et disciplina sua per idoneos et ab ipso delectos ad hoc ipsum ministros administratus, electos suos, quos habet in mundo dispersos et uult nihilominus mundi postestatibus esse subiectos, colligit ad se, sibique et Ecclesiae suae incorporat atque in ea sic gubernat, ut purgati indies plenius peccatis bene beateque uiuant et in futuro.”

35 De regno Christi, I:5 (Wendel, 57).

36 De regno Christi, II:60=final ch. (Wendel, 293).

The sphere of the “kingdom of Christ” is, therefore, not just within the internal state of believer or the church community alone; it is rather a sort of the Christian republic (respublica)\(^{38}\) broadly embracing the civic life. In that sense, the treatise could be said as a blueprint for the establishment of that kingdom.

7.3. The “Kingdom of Christ” in Calvin’s *Institutes*

7.3.1. The First Edition of the Institutes

The historical overview of the concept of the “kingdom of Christ” demonstrates that our French reformer also lived in that Augustinian tradition, at least at the time of his youth. In the discussion on the ecclesial power in his first edition of the *Institutes*, Calvin affirms that the church is the kingdom of Christ ruled by nothing but his word.\(^{39}\) In regard to the twofold government, spiritual and political, Calvin at first mentions it in terms of the Christian freedom. There is a twofold government (*duplex regimen*), jurisdiction (*iurisdictio*) or kingdom (*regnum*), or even two worlds (*duo mundi*), each of which has a different king and a different law, just in a person.\(^{40}\)

He picks this up again in the discussion on the political power and defines them as a government “that resides in the soul or inner person and respects eternal life” and “that

\(^{38}\) Cf. De regno Christi, II:final (Wendel, 294). The critics pointed out the similarity of Bucer’s view with Plato’s *Respublica*, which he of course denied. Torrance calls it “Communio Christiana” (Kingdom and Church, 87).

\(^{39}\) OS 1:240, “cum ecclesia regnum sit Christi, regent autem non nisi per verbum suum....”

\(^{40}\) OS 1:232-233.
pertains only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality. Just as the difference between body and soul, or this world and the world to come, Christ’s spiritual kingdom is totally different from the civil government. Moreover, in the discussion on the civil government, while Calvin insists of the universality of the moral law, he also maintains that the civil laws themselves do and may differ according to governments as long as they realize the law of love which is deeply engraved on human soul, and whose basis is justice.

    It is no difficult to see here many similarities to the Lutheran view. What is more important is the fact that this discussion on the two kingdoms in the 1536 Institutes is taken into its final edition of 1559 without any essential changes. In other words, the last chapter on the civil government of the 1559 Institutes is never a sum of Calvin’s mature political thought, but is basically the understanding of young Calvin who had not even visited Geneva yet. Surprisingly, as far as his Institutes is concerned, Calvin did not change his fundamental view on the topic in his life time.

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41 OS 1:258, “quod in anima seu interior homine residet, aeternamque vitam respicit” and “quod ad instituendam civilem duntaxat externamque morum justitiam pertinent.”

42 OS 1:258.

43 OS 1:269.


45 See the text of the said chapter (Inst, IV.xx) in OS, and check the portion of the 1536 edition in the text.
7.3.2. **Differences from Luther**

The similarity of Calvin’s view of the two kingdoms with Luther’s does not necessarily mean that there is no difference at all between them. Once we broaden our research on Calvin’s view of the civil government beyond the *Institutes*, some differences naturally appear.\(^{46}\) It seems, however, that most of the differences between Calvin and Luther, in terms of political thought, are probably due to the historical and social, as well as personal, situations of the two.\(^{47}\) First of all, they belong to different generations. Whereas Luther was the reformer and frontier of the first generation, Calvin belongs to the second generation and has seen trials and errors of the reformation over twenty years. Secondly, they were different in career. Luther was a German monk and a doctor teaching the sacred books at the university; Calvin, a French layman and a lawyer trained as a humanist. And thirdly, we should add a difference of political situations in which they lived. While Luther could promote the reform under the patronage of a German king, Calvin had to do the same in one of the free cities in Swiss, to which he was drifted as a refugee, and to work as a hired teacher or pastor in the unceasing conflicts with the civil authorities. It would be no

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wonder that these causes are reflected in such a realistic discussion on the civil government even if it is done by means of the same Scripture and tradition.

Given that, however, there seem to be also theological differences between Luther and Calvin, particularly in his later views. One thing is the issue of the law or discipline in the church. Although Calvin has argued it already in the first edition of the Institutes, \footnote{Ex. OS 1:89-91.} it is probably during three years in Strasburg, especially through the fellowship with Bucer, that Calvin’s conviction of its significance was deepened. As we have seen, the “kingdom of Christ” means for Bucer not only the static status of believer’s spirituality under the rule of Christ, but the more dynamic move in which the congregation is daily being taught, repented, comforted, and disciplined by his word through the earthly life. The fact that Bucer’s \textit{De regno Christi} was translated into French in 1558 by Calvin’s support tells how much he appreciated this Bucer’s theological and practical contribution. \footnote{\textit{Du royaume de Jésus-Christ}, published by Jaques Berthet (Wendel, lx-lxii). Cf. David VanDrunen, “The Two Kingdoms: A Reassessment of the Transformationist Calvin,” \textit{Calvin Theological Journal} 40 (2005): 255, n.26.}

Another distinctive feature of Calvin’s view on the “kingdom of Christ,” in comparison not only with Luther but with other reformers as well, is his emphasis on its eschatological aspect. Although Bucer also insisted of the same, he nevertheless had an ideal (biblical) picture of the kingdom in his mind which could and should be realized on earth as much as possible. Calvin’s perspective is more future-oriented. He understands the kingdom of Christ strictly in terms of the salvation history of God, always heading
toward its end. In my view, it is through his exegetical works, particularly those on the Old Testament prophets intensively done in his later days, that Calvin was reassured of that perspective.

7.4. Calvin’s Interpretation of the Old Testament Prophets

7.4.1. The Old Testament Hermeneutics in the Reformation Era

Although that the Old Testament is the Christian book is the major premise for the Christian faith and theology, and thus a common proposition for either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, yet the matter of how to read or interpret it is not so simple. Two traditional methods in the biblical interpretation, literal reading of the text represented by the Antiochian school and allegorical reading by the Alexandrian, have been retained, though with some variations, since the ancient church through the middle ages up to the sixteenth century.

It is generally recognized that the sixteenth century reformers, whose motto was “sola scriptura,” tended to avoid such arbitrary interpretation as the so-called fourfold sense and adapted the literal-historical sense of the Scriptures. However, apart from the

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50 Torrance asserts that, in Calvin, the two kingdoms seem more overlapped, and the victorious aspect of the kingdom of Christ is more intensified (Kingdom and Church, 155 and 160). He also points out the significance of covenant in Calvin’s view of the kingdom which is perhaps influenced by Zwingli and Bucer (ibid., 156).


53 See, for instance, Aquinas’ definition, Summa theologiae, I, q.1, art.10; I-II, q.91, art.5, q.107, art.1.
New Testament, the literal reading of the Old Testament itself makes it a book without Jesus Christ. In fact, the word of God in past which has no word to the present Christian church is just useless. According to Richard Muller, the reformers like Luther, Oecolampadius, Melanchthon, and Calvin have never lost “the flexibility of reference available to the allegorical method: The text must be allowed to speak to the church.”

A question is how much we could read literally and historically the Old Testament texts and how much we could interpret them to unite them with Jesus Christ. It is particularly in the interpretation of the prophetic books that the discretion and ability of an interpreter, better or worse, is disclosed.

For example, in the introductions attached by Luther himself to the prophetic books of the German Bible, he quite extensively refers to the kingdom of Christ and regards those books as prophecies of it. However, it is not the case in such books as Daniel or Ezekiel which includes apocalyptic prophecies. For Luther, the book of Daniel was a book of prophecy not only about the coming Messiah but also about years and hours


57 See *Deutsche Bibel (DB)* vol. 6–12.
when the last day of Christ will be, as well as what will happen then.\textsuperscript{58} In other words, the Old Testament prophets are important for Luther principally because it speaks the present church so that he pays little attention to their original historical context.\textsuperscript{59} It is further notable that Luther hasted to finish translating the book of Daniel before the Lord’s coming.\textsuperscript{60}

Likewise, Erasmus tried to apply the Old Testament prophecies to the present situation yet in slightly different way. According to Hoffman, Erasmus classified the Old Testament prophecies about Christ into the verbal and the non-verbal, namely type and figure signifying Christ; the latter was revealed by Christ himself, the former by the Gospel writers.\textsuperscript{61} Erasmus himself, however, explored more spiritual sense than literal one, in

\textsuperscript{58} See, the introduction to the book of Daniel in 1530 (\textit{DB 11/II:127:4-9}). Although Luther had felt uncomfortable with the book of Revelation at the time of 1522 (\textit{DB7:404:11-12}), he gave a detailed historical interpretation in his introduction of 1545 (\textit{DB7:407-421}). Cf. Maurice E. Schild, \textit{Abendländische Bibelvorreden bis zur Lutherbible} (Gütersloher, 1970), 234-241. Torrance points out a possibility of influences on this by Francis Lambert, \textit{Exegeseos in sanctam divi Ioannis Apocalypsin} (1528) and Andreas Osiander, \textit{Coniectura de ultimis temporibus ac de fine mundi} (1544). See, Torrance, \textit{Kingdom and Church}, 19 n.1.

\textsuperscript{59} Cf. Muller, “The Hermeneutic of Promise and Fulfillment,” 79.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Luthers Sämtliche Schriften}, Walch ed., 6:893. See, Torrance, \textit{Kingdom and Church}, 19.

accord with the hermeneutical tradition since Augustine,\(^6^2\) and even more applicable sense to the church rather than simply to Christ alone.\(^6^3\)

7.4.2. Calvin’s Interpretation of the Prophetic Books in the Old Testament

Even acknowledging the varied approaches to hermeneutics in Calvin’s time,\(^6^4\) there are still some aspects of Calvin’s exegesis that are highly original.\(^6^5\) First and foremost, the thoroughness of his historical-literal approach to the text. To put it in other way, he does not interpret the Old Testament prophecies by relating them easily to the New Testament,

\(^6^2\) As seen especially in the “Book of Rules” of Tychonius. See, Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, ch. 30 ff. Preus points out that medieval interpreters misunderstood the third hermeneutic rule of Augustine and confused “spiritual” with the “figurative” meaning (*De sp. et lit.* 36). See, James Samuel Preus, *From Shadow to Promise: Old Testament Interpretation from Augustine to the Young Luther* (Cambridge, 1969), 12 and 17.

\(^6^3\) Hoffman, *Rhetoric and Theology*, 103. Henri de Lubac asserts, citing Congar, that one of the most crucial defects in the medieval scholastic interpretation of the Bible is lack of the anagogical / eschatological sense because the medieval theology considered the allegorical sense more important and did not take “the form of an exegesis”(*Medieval Exegesis*, II:195). This analogy, however, could turn out to be both the upward-mystical sense and the futurist-eschatological sense (Cf. Preus, *From Shadow to Promise*, 22) because the Christian hope is ultimately in God (Cf. Augustine, *Ps. xxxii:2*) or Christ (Cf. Preus, *From Shadow to Promise*, 117). According to Preus, Bonaventure’s interpretation, for instance, tended to be more mystical (*From Shadow to Promise*, 40), while Lyra’s was more future-oriented (*From Shadow to Promise*, 67). This may also give some clues to explain the variety of hermeneutics around our reformer.

\(^6^4\) One of the interesting texts which shows the variety of Calvin’s exegesis is Isa. 11:1-10 (CO 36:234-246 ). While he rejects the arbitrary interpretation by the Papists on the spiritual gifts in verse 2 and takes literally the eschatological peace among animals in verses 6ff., he also considers seriously its “spiritual meaning” of the same text. Or, in the lectures on the book of Daniel, Calvin identifies a figure in 8:13 and 15-16 straightforwardly with Christ (CO 41:104-111), and yet takes the number of 2300 days literally though he points out that it is based on the lunar calendar. On Calvin’s view of prophecy in Daniel, see Barbara Pitkin’s “Prophecy and History in Calvin’s Lectures on Daniel (1561)” in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, herausgegeben von Katharina Bracht und David S. du Toit (Berlin, 2007), 323-347.

Christ in particular. For example, in his lectures on the book of Micah (1559), Calvin provides a strictly historical-contextual exegesis on the text in spite of the fact that it has been interpreted as a prophecy of Christ or his kingdom by many interpreters. But, someone may wonder, what about the apocalyptic texts in the prophets?

One of the latest studies on Calvin’s interpretation of the Old Testament prophets, particularly on his unpublished sermons (1552-54) on the book of Ezekiel, reached the same conclusion. This study was worthy of notice at least with two reasons. First, it might demonstrate Calvin’s interpretation, though in the form of sermon, on the apocalyptic texts in the prophets. Since his last lecture on Ezekiel was quitted in the middle of chapter twenty by death, it has been in the darkness how Calvin, who never left a commentary or lecture or sermon on the book of Revelation, interpret the apocalyptic texts such as in the latter half of Ezekiel. Second interest was, since the study dealt with Calvin’s sermons, to see more how he applies those texts to the daily life of the audience.

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66 As we see later (n.69), Calvin was always aware of how the Christian exegesis of the Old Testament looks like to the Jews. The right interpretation for Calvin must have objectivity (or publicity).


69 Ioannis Calvini in viginti prima Ezechielis prophetae capita Praelectiones,...(CO40:21-516). It has been started on February 2nd, 1564, and continued up to 20:44. It was published in 1565 after his death.

70 Occasionally, however, Calvin has already referred to Ez 37:4, for example, in the discussion of the Institutes (ex. II.x.21 and III.xxv.4), Psychopannychia (ex. Zimmerli, 64-65), or even in biblical commentaries (ex. Comm., Luke 7:15), where Calvin still seems to follow the traditional interpretation by Fathers (ex. Justin, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Cyprian, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Ambrose) considering it as a proof of the future resurrection. For the history of interpretations on Ezekiel, see Wilhelm Neuss, Das Buch Ezechiel in Theologie und Kunst bis zum Ende des zwölften Jahrhunderts (Munster, 1912) and Michael A.
The result was, in a sense, anticipated. That is that we can hardly get a hint for Calvin’s interpretation of Revelation from this series of sermons on Ezekiel,\(^{71}\) because he reads its apocalyptic texts strictly in terms of the return from the Babylonian exile without connecting any to the New Testament book.\(^{72}\) Calvin rather considers the suffering people of God in and after the exile as a beginning of the kingdom of Christ, and is more concerned with the spiritual battle they fought and how they overcame it.\(^{73}\)

This basic hermeneutics for the book of Ezekiel is still hold in the last lectures shortly before his death. In his exposition on 17:22, Calvin maintains as follows:

> Christian writers have erred in urging so precisely that anything said about the restitution of the Church cannot be understood otherwise but of the person of Christ, and thus they make themselves ridiculous to the Jews. But, as it has been said already, as often as the prophets offer the hope of liberty to the elect and the faithful, they comprehend the whole of the time from the return of the people, or from the end of their exile to the end of the kingdom of Christ. When, therefore, the kingdom of Christ is treated, we must suppose its beginning from the building of the temple after people’s return to the home land fulfilling seventy years: and then we must set the end, not at the ascension of Christ, nor in the first or second centuries, but through the

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\(^{71}\) de Boer, *Calvin on the Visions*, 233, referring to a witness of Colladon, Calvin’s biographer, that Calvin could not understand the Apocalypse well (*Methodus*, 41-42). However, we are not without any clue to his understanding of visions and symbols, either. See, his commentaries, for example, on Ezek. ch.1. On the understanding of the book of Revelation in the Reformation era, see Irena Backus, *Reformation Reading of the Apocalypse* (Oxford, 2000) which includes the discussion of the relationship between Calvin, Colladon, and the book of Revelation; and her article of “The Beast: Interpretations of Daniel 7:2-9 and Apocalypse 13:1-4 in Lutheran, Zwinglian, and Calvinist Circles in the Late Sixteenth Century,” *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, no. 3 (2000): 59-77. Cf. also, Erik de Boer, “The Book of Revelation in Calvin’s Geneva,” in *Calvin’s Book*, ed. Neuser.

\(^{72}\) de Boer, *Calvin on the Visions*, 232.

\(^{73}\) de Boer, *Calvin on the Visions*, 228-229, especially the discussion as follows: “Calvin sees no eschatological dimension in Ezekiel’s prophesies other than the inclusion and inauguration of Christ’s kingdom in the period beginning with his birth. There is no trace of apocalyptic expectation and no inclination to treat the later visions of Ezekiel as apocalyptic texts. Every prophetic promise, both in oracles and visions, points to the Redeemer. The initiation of his kingdom is the only real opening to eschatology” (ibid., 229).
whole progress of his kingdom, until he shall appear at the last day.\footnote{242}

Here again, having avoided interpreting the prophecy as a direct prediction to Christ, Calvin understands it as a prophecy indicating the return from the exile. Nonetheless, he also regards the liberty of God’s elect as a commencement of the kingdom of Christ which progresses until the last day of his salvation history.

Besides the thorough historical-literal interpretation, here appears to be second feature of Calvin’s hermeneutic of the Old Testament. As we have stated above, the purely historical interpretation of the Old Testament would have no relation at all to the present readers. Calvin, on the other hand, avoids an arbitrary and allegorical interpretation.\footnote{75} In his view, the true sense of Scripture is both literal and spiritual, and there is no dichotomy in between.\footnote{76} What method of interpretation, then, does Calvin take?

It seems, as Muller points out, that Calvin employs a rhetorical concept of \textit{“complexus”} as a clue to interpret the prophets as he himself described it in his lectures on the book of Joel (1559).\footnote{77} It means that through conjunction of words, an enlarged and

\footnote{74} “Et in eo errant scriptores christiani, quidam praecise urgent, non posse aliter quam de Christi persona intelligi quidquid de restitutione ecclesiae dicitur, ita se faciunt ridiculos Iudaicis. Atqui ut iam dictum est, quoties prophetae spem libertatis faciunt electis et fidelibus, comprehendunt totum illud tempus a reditu populi, vel a fine exsilii usque ad finem regni Christi. Quum ergo de regno Christi agitur, sumamus exordium in templo illo, quod exstructum fuit postquam populus completis se pruauginta annis reedit in patriam: deinde finem sumamus non in adscensu Christi, neque in uno aut altero saeculo: sed in toto progressu regni eius usque dum appareat ultimo die” (CO 40:417).

\footnote{75} Calvin, of course, does not deny the allegory itself. He actually interprets the allegory as an allegory. For example, on “Leviathan” in Isa. 27:1 (CO 36:448), he explicates that “Nec vero mihi dubium est, quin allegorice de Satana, totoque eius regno tractet, eum sub portentesi cuiusdam animalis figura descriptus: et interea perstringens obliquas artes, quibus se ad nocendum insinuat”.


\footnote{77} \textit{Comm.}, Joel 2:30-31 (CO 42:573-574), “Respondeo prophetam comprehendere totum Christi regnum ab initio usque ad finem: et hoc statis trum est: et alis etiam locis diximus prophetas communiter
comprehensive sense can be newly derived from or indicated by the original sense (*sensus*) of a word or writing. Calvin seems to have viewed this as the rhetoric of prophets themselves. Allegorical interpretation is to read another sense (*sensus*) forcedly into one sense, and this he rejected as a perverted interpretation of the text. Calvin, instead, specifies the literal-historical *sensus* of a word as precise as possible, yet inquires simultaneously more essential and spiritual matter derived from a prophecy, or more comprehensive sense indicated by it. Hence, while Calvin interprets the prophecy strictly in its historical context, he still could extend the sense and refer to Jesus Christ and his kingdom which the prophecy signifies, in his judgment, in the salvation history.

Calvin’s hermeneutics, hence, is rather said as both literal and anagogical, or historical and eschatological. It premises his strong theological conviction of the consistency of the Old and the New Testaments, and the view that the kingdom of Christ is a whole process to be accomplished in the end of the world. For Calvin, the


80 Cf. *Inst.* II.x.

relationship between the Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament events is not allegorically corresponding ‘one to one’ relation, but one uninterrupted history. The whole Old Testament history never stops at the birth of Christ but continues to flow unto the end of the world. Therefore, the prophecies would be fulfilled in the multi-stages of the salvation history.  

Without ignoring the difference between the Old and New Testaments, Calvin thus recognizes that what the Old Testament people have experienced, particularly the suffering of and the deliverance from the exile, will happen analogically to the New Testament people. Since the kingdom of Christ is the history of one elected people of God, they repeatedly experience sufferings and deliverances of same kind but in different levels.

The third feature of Calvin’s hermeneutic is that once he comprehends the characteristics of the kingdom of Christ prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled under the Gospel of the New Testament, he makes it as an interpretive framework for other minor prophecies. This is a hermeneutical principle, namely, an interpretive movement from the clear to the unclear. In fact, the above mentioned derivative interpretation is only possible if the object of derivation is clear enough. According to Calvin’s understanding, the “kingdom of Christ” signified by the prophets is not earthly but spiritual.

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82 Muller calls this “a hermeneutic of multiple fulfillment.” See, Muller, “The Hermeneutic of Promise and Fulfillment,” 77.


84 Cf. Comm., Isa. 4:2 (CO 36:96), “Qui restrixyunt ad Christi personam, ridiculos se faciunt Judaensi, ac si prae inopia scripturae locos in suum comnodum torquens. Sunt autem alii scripturae loci ex quibus plenius evincere licet Christum esse verum Deum et verum hominem, ut nihil hic opus sit philosophari.”
or heavenly,\textsuperscript{85} filled with more abundant blessings\textsuperscript{86} and peace,\textsuperscript{87} universal\textsuperscript{88} and perpetual\textsuperscript{89} in dominion over all the countries,\textsuperscript{90} hidden in this world\textsuperscript{91} yet revealed and completed in the last day.\textsuperscript{92} In the light of these qualities, examining how close it is to them, Calvin interprets each prophecy.\textsuperscript{93}

7.5. Calvin’s View of the “Kingdom of Christ”

Calvin’s view of the “kingdom of Christ” can be well contextualized in, by and large, the Augustinian tradition just as other sixteenth century reformers’ views are. However, it is through his exegesis on the Old Testament prophets that gave him some distinctive features in his view.

\textsuperscript{85} Ex. Comm., Isa. 65:10 (CO 37:424); Jer. 23:5-6 (CO 38:411), 31:12 (CO 38:660); Zech. 14:8 (CO 44:372).

\textsuperscript{86} Ex. Comm., Jer. 30:20 (CO 38:633-634); Amos 9:13 (CO 43:172); Zech. 14:8 (CO 44:372).

\textsuperscript{87} Ex. Comm., Zech. 9:10 (CO 44:273), 14:8 (CO 44:372).

\textsuperscript{88} Ex. Comm., Amos 9:12 (CO 43:172).

\textsuperscript{89} Ex. Comm., Isa. 45:18 (CO 37:143), 53:8 (CO 37:261); Mic. 5:4 (CO 43:370).

\textsuperscript{90} Ex. Comm., Jer. 33:9 (CO 39:57), 49:6 (CO 39:352); Mic. 4:2 (CO 43:341); Zech. 12:9 (CO 44:333).

\textsuperscript{91} Ex. Comm., Isa. 9:7 (CO 36:199); Dan. 2:44-45 (CO 40:605).

\textsuperscript{92} Ex. Comm., Isa. 35:1 (CO 36:590).

\textsuperscript{93} Ex. Comm., Zech. 14:8 (CO 44:372), “Si quis obiciat, hanc interpretationem videri coactam, in promptu est solution, quia quum certum sit prophetam hic concionari de regno Christi, tenenda etiam illa est regula, Quidquid de regno Christi praedicatur, hoc debere referri ad eius naturam. Quum ergo spirituale sit Christi regnum, non dubium est quin, ubi scriptura dicit fore largum proventum vini et tritici, ut alibi vidimus, fore opulentiam bonorum omnium, fore pacem tranquillum, fore dies lucidos; quin hoc totum intelligat prout fert regni Christi natura.” Cf. also, Comm., Jer. 30:10 (CO 38:622), 33:9 (CO 39:57); Amos 9:12 (CO 43:172), 9:15 (CO 43:175); Mic. 5:4 (CO 43:370); Zech. 12:9 (CO 44:333).
First, in Calvin’s vision, the “kingdom of Christ” continues to progress toward the last day of perfection.  

Progress to the goal means, in turn, that there should be incessant developments, growth, and reforms until then. In other words, the divine work of sanctification will be necessarily done on earth both individually and socially.  

For instance, in his commentaries on chapter 35 of the book of Isaiah (1559), Calvin states, referring to the redemption as a gift of the kingdom of Christ, that we should not be satisfied by our own salvation but rather work hard to make daily progress toward the goal.  

This attitude, however, is required only by the reasons of the rule of Christ’s gospel. It is fundamentally different from the medieval view of kingdom which urged people to good works by fear and anxiety of the last judgment. That is to say, even if there still may remain the social framework of the Middle Ages, Christians living in this gospel are supposed to willingly obey the Christ’s kingship with gratitude.  

Socially, this progressive view of the kingdom functions neither to deny the earthly authorities nor to regard them absolute. In the lecture on Micah 4:3 (1559), for instance, Calvin refutes the Anabaptist’s view of uselessness of the civil government by saying that

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95 Cf. Peter Wilcox, “‘The Restoration of the Church’ in Calvin’s ‘Commentaries in Isaiah the prophet’” in Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte (1994).

96 Comm., Isa. 35:10 (CO 36:597), “iam quia haec redemptio peculiare est regni Christi donum, sequitur eum nobis unicum esse liberatorem… Caeterum non satis est nos semel redemptos fuisse: hic enim finis est, ut colamus ecclesiam Dei, atque in dies magis ac magis proficiamus. Nos ergo ubi a Christo liberati sumus, omnibus nervis in hunc finem contendere atque semper eniti oportet.”

97 Calvin continues his exposition cited in n.91 as follows: “Per vocem exsultationis et gaudii significat tantam felicitatem fore sub regno Christi, ut uberem gratulationis materiam habituri simus” (CO 36:597).

it is and will be necessary, until the end of the world in fact, because of the very fact that the kingdom of Christ is not perfected yet and thus mixed with the wicked.\textsuperscript{99} On the other hand, this means simultaneously not to see any political regime absolute. According to Calvin, as the prophet Isaiah describes the kingdom of Christ in comparison with earthly governments in 9:7, it is the Christ’s kingdom that will be the best model of government if the justice and happiness are most important for the people there.\textsuperscript{100} In other words, Calvin is provided with more critical eyes by which he sees earthly authorities not merely relative to God, but also under the light of the kingdom of Christ.\textsuperscript{101}

Second feature of Calvin’s view is the width of its perspective. He never even tried to identify the town of Geneva with the kingdom of Christ. Since he was just a pastor of the church in “Diaspora,” to borrow Oberman’s term, his eyes have always looked at the


\textsuperscript{101} This relativization of the state power will later be led to the idea of resistance. Cf. David Willis-Watkins, “Calvin’s Prophetic Reinterpretation of Kingship” in \textit{Probing the Reformed Tradition}, ed. McKee and Armstrong (Louisville, 1989), 126-129. Probably, this is also one of the reasons why Calvin has continuously attached the prefatory letter to the king of France to his \textit{Institutes}, from the first edition to the last. Despite the fact that Francis I himself died in 1547, Calvin has retained the letter not because it is simply a historical document, but, it seems, because he hoped and believed that the book for the reform and progress of the kingdom of Christ would someday change his home country and save his people.
majestic kingdom of Christ far beyond. In the dedicatory letter to Friedrich III in 1563 for the lectures on the book of Jeremiah, Calvin pleaded him to accept the Christian (evangelical) refugees who fled to him. Calvin testifies that he himself once was also a refugee from his mother country thirty years ago for the sake of the gospel truth and the pure religion, and thus has been a foreigner in the city of Geneva, and that God nonetheless has been abundantly merciful to him. Yet, Calvin writes, the more he receives grace, the more he is concerned about his people in France and Flanders. As a matter of fact, approximately 120 missionaries were sent from Geneva, during eight years from 1555 to 1563, not only to France but also diverse places in Europe and even to Brazil. The lecture on the book of Daniel, published during that period (1561), was dedicated to “all the pious worshippers of God who desire for the kingdom of Christ rightly established in France.” Obviously, Calvin considers the kingdom of Christ not just in terms of the spiritual progress but of the geographical expansion as well.

Last, but not least, Calvin’s unqualified trust for the Christ’s kingdom. In the lecture on Daniel, he insists that “however the children of God are dispersed, no reputation

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104 CO 20:78.


106 “Iohannes Calvinus piis omnibus Dei cultoribus qui regnum Christi in Gallia recte constitui cupiunt” (CO 18:614).
they receive, it is quite certain that the kingdom of Christ remains safe and sure,” for it is not outward or earthly, but celestial.107 This conviction was never shaken even in his last lectures on the book of Ezekiel as we can clearly see in the following citation:

For what sort of the appearance of Christ’s kingdom is? Indeed, nothing but despair comes to us if we judge of the kingdom of Christ by the present state of affairs. But when we see how the gospel creeps to the ground, this passage would come into our consideration of that God raises up to high a humble and contemptible tree. Let us learn at the same time that the changes which repeatedly occur and are perceived in the world are to be imputed to the pride of those who are blinded by their own fame; for kings, as we have said, forget that they are human beings, and thus rebel against God. Hence, they should of necessity fall. If this is not fulfilled immediately, let us know patiently to anticipate the effect of this prophecy. Whatever happens, God has so established the kingdom of Christ alone, that it shall exist as long as the sun and moon…. 108

The unshakable trust for the kingdom of Christ is, needless to say, not necessarily distinctive to Calvin alone but common to all the reformers. However, it is also true that Calvin declared repeatedly his conviction of the progress of the kingdom of Christ and hope for its completion throughout the exposition of the prophets in his last years, not only in the lectures themselves but in his closing prayers as well. 109 Therefore, although Calvin


109 Those prayers are omitted in CO but included in their sixteenth century editions. See, Wilcox, “Calvin as commentator on the Prophets,”116. Calvin rarely uses the term of the kingdom of “Christ” in the
has surely had a vision of Christ’s kingdom since the early stage of his career, it is likely that it was deepened, in spite of many conflicts and setbacks around him, through his study and meditation on the Old Testament prophets.

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prayers but simply “the kingdom” or “your kingdom,” though. Instead, he often adds a modifier of “heavenly” or “celestial” to the word “kingdom.”
CONCLUSIONS

Each of the chapters in this study has shed light on both variety and complexity of Calvin’s eschatology in the context of the sixteenth century. As we conclude the study, it is necessary to avoid carefully oversimplifying or modernizing Calvin’s teaching, a problem into which many dogmatic approaches to his thought have tended to fall. Our historically contextual examination, instead, revealed various facets of his teaching of last things.

1. Calvin’s eschatology partook of the broad streams of Augustinian tradition shared by his contemporaries.

As recent historical studies of Calvin, particularly by Oberman, Steinmetz, Muller, and Backus, show, his teachings are basically traditional and owe much to the theological and spiritual heritage in the past. This is also true in the case of his eschatology taught in various genres of his treatises, namely, catechism and Institutes, Psychopannychia, and biblical commentaries. Although he does not always depend on a specific source or a theologian, Calvin, like other reformers, is definitely in the Augustinian tradition in such aspects as a teleological view of history and twofold (present-future) eschatology, at least their very basic ideas, and thus far from apocalypticism in his eschatology.

Hence, a picture of Calvin in our examination is very different from, for instance, that of Quistorp’s ahistorical or uncontextual presentation articulated in existential or neo-orthodox terminology and judged anachronistically by modern standards. The latter often ignores even simple facts that Calvin has widely read and profoundly learned from ancient fathers, as well as medieval theologians and exegetes, and also been in dialogue directly or indirectly with his contemporaries.
2. *Calvin’s eschatology is characterized from its earliest stage by a highly biblical and teleological tendency.*

Although the Augustinian view of last things is evident in his early works, Calvin’s eschatology is characterized by its biblical and teleological emphasis. This tendency was even more intensified in his second edition of the *Institutes*, particularly by its notable section of “*meditatio futurae vitae*.”

Schulze, and then other older scholarship, was right that the idea of “*meditatio futurae vitae*” is one of the significant concepts to understand the eschatological/teleological character of Calvin’s theology and its “forward-looking,” or more appropriately “consummation-orientated,” spirituality. On the other hand, however, the concept is neither as monastic nor Platonic for Calvin as Schulze designates. Despite some medieval background and sixteenth century humanistic (Erasmian) influence, it is thoroughly reformed by the word of God, especially through Calvin’s own study of the book of *Romans*. It is decisively important here, as Muller suggests, to recall that Calvin himself considered the second edition of the *Institutes* a theological textbook and the *Romans* commentary inseparable and deeply interrelated.

3. *Calvin’s eschatology of the afterlife, expressed primarily in his Psychopannychia, is evangelical and progressive.*

Another significant facet of early Calvin’s eschatology appears in his relatively unknown work of *Psychopannychia*. This polemical treatise unmistakably shows his evangelical view of soul firmly based upon the Scriptures and ancient fathers. Calvin particularly insists on the significance of “awake-ness” or conversion of soul, which secures it not only for future glory but for present happiness as well. In other words, for
Calvin, the happiness of a believer begins already at the present to grow and be perfected at the end.

It is also important to locate and consider this treatise rightly in the context of development of Calvin’s teachings because this evangelical and progressive view of one’s soul plays a crucial role in the later formation of his eschatology in general, a doctrine of the final resurrection in particular.

4. **The greater part of Calvin’s eschatology is not found in the Institutes. His teachings are fundamentally exegetical rather than philosophical or speculative or dogmatically determined.**

A significantly different picture of Calvin’s eschatology comes from the exegetical examination of his biblical commentaries, in comparison with the more dogmatic and topical approach found in other studies. Although it is true that Calvin eventually made a doctrine of the final resurrection as one of the theological loci in the final edition of the Institutes, it is far from the truth that this doctrine summarizes the full content of Calvin’s eschatology. On the contrary, Calvin extensively argues in his biblical commentaries other eschatological subjects such as the return of Christ and the last judgment, Antichrist and signs of the last times, the kingdom of God and the restoration of the world. In fact, any text, even a word, was unavoidable for a student of the Scriptures like Calvin.

Now, is Quistorp right that Calvin’s eschatology was fundamentally de-mythologized from apocalyptic texts of the Scriptures because of his horror of apocalyptism, and thus that he was less concerned with last things than personal salvation? Simply, it is wrong because it is not the fact.
In his exegesis of eschatological texts in the New Testament books, Pauline epistles in particular, Calvin utilizes his views on last things discussed in his earlier treatises, especially the *Romans Commentary*, the 1539 *Institutes*, and *Psychopannychia*, as a hermeneutical framework. It is Calvin’s hermeneutics to consider his earlier theological and exegetical results together. This is quite different from what Quistorp meant by the term of “de-mythologization.”

Then, Calvin proceeds to deal with difficult sayings or curious episodes in the biblical texts, in the Gospels for instance, which make him perplexed at times for they do not always fit to the Pauline paradigm. In that case, as Backus’s studies demonstrate most recently, it is Calvin’s basic attitude all the time to seek for a simple and the most reasonable meaning among variously possible interpretations on the text, and to keep away from human curiosity as far as possible. This restrained attitude shows Calvin’s self-discipline in his scholarly exercise as well as his piety, not his horror of apocalypticism.

5. *Calvin’s eschatology was complete only with the composition of his final Old Testament commentaries on prophets.*

Another serious misunderstanding of Quistorp characterizing Calvin’s eschatology as “individualization” or “spiritualization” is largely due to his ignorance of Calvin’s commentaries of the Old Testament prophets. Although some scholars like Torrance saw this issue, they did not develop it fully. As our chronological, developmental examination of his teachings demonstrated, the young Calvin’s uplifting eschatology is considerably expanded to a broad vision of the “kingdom of Christ” in the mature Reformer.

While Calvin has surely had a vision of Christ’s kingdom since his early stage of career, it seems to have been strengthened and deepened through his study and meditation
on the books of prophets. For Calvin, it is a sure thing that the kingdom of Christ continues to progress toward the last day of perfection. He believed and hoped, therefore, that the divine work of restoration and Christ’s rule on the earth did advance, in spite of many conflicts and setbacks around him, individually and socially, spiritually and geographically.
THESES

Theses Related to Dissertation

1. Calvin’s eschatology partook of the broad streams of Augustinian tradition shared by his contemporaries.

2. Calvin’s eschatology is characterized since its early stage by its highly biblical and teleological tendency.

3. Calvin’s eschatology of the afterlife, expressed primarily in his Psychopannychia, is evangelical and progressive.

4. The greater part of Calvin’s eschatology is not found in the Institutes. His teachings are fundamentally exegetical rather than philosophical or speculative or dogmatically determined.

5. Calvin’s eschatology in exegesis of the New Testament texts is frame worked by his earlier views though he also encountered new or difficult issues with which he had never dealt in his exegetical works.

6. Calvin’s eschatology was complete only with the composition of his final Old Testament commentaries on prophets.

Theses Related to Course Work

7. The Arian controversy was not just a doctrinal debate. It occurred in the politics of the ancient church where Athanasian, a champion of orthodoxy, played a significant role as a bishop rather than a theologian.

8. “Sola Scriptura” is not a claim that denies ecclesial tradition as a subordinate rule especially in theology. It rather embraces the dynamic relationship among the divine revelation, church, and ecclesial traditions or confessions.

9. The ignorance of ecclesial traditions or confessions, which have regulative function for an interpreter of the Scriptures, is not only arrogant but even dangerous especially in today’s individualistic society because it easily leads to an arbitrary interpretation of them.

10. Both faithfulness to the testimony of the Scriptures and conciliarity or listening to the testimonies of various churches, particularly the voices often neglected, are significant especially in the ecumenical dialogue if it is motivated by a serious wish for the reconciliation and unity.
11. The apologetical response to the evidential problem of evil, including natural evil, should be a defense rather than a theodicy, a reasonable explanation of why a just God allows evil in the world.

**Theses Related to Personal Interest**

12. The Scripture is the living word of God transmitted by those who were renewed by the living God. A theology based firmly upon this book, therefore, must be not only reasonable but also doxological in nature.

13. It is the eschatological hope for the consummation of the kingdom of God or Christ that seems to have shaped a dauntless yet delightful faith of the Reformed tradition.

14. It is impossible for us to search for God’s will in a natural evil like the recent Great earthquake and tsunami in Japan. It is possible, however, to know God’s will unmistakably revealed in the person of the incarnated and suffered Word of God: that is, to love and live with and for people in need and despair.
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CO  Joannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia
CR  Corpus Reformatorum
OM  Philippi Melanthonis opera quae supersunt omnia

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