

Lecture 2

... John Calvin to Geneva, now out of Geneva and Strasbourg, and I mentioned some of his best writings at that time, his reply to Saddle we've been looking at, his denunciation of the Pope, his affirmation of *sola scriptura*, and now, to me anyway, and I think it's an historical interest, the indication that there are really two opponents of the Protestant Reformation that their fighting. He says, "We are assailed by two sects which seem to differ most widely from each other. For what similitude is there in appearance between the Pope and the Anabaptists. And yet that you may see that Satan never transforms himself so cunningly as not in some measure to betray himself, the principle weapon with which they both assail us is the same. For when they boast extravagantly of the Spirit the tendency certainly is to sink and bury the Word of God that they may make room for their own falsehoods." That's a little gem, you know. He ^yl doesn't belabor that point a lot here, but what he is saying is the Anabaptists, they say we follow the Spirit, and that is their excuse for not having to stick to the text of Scripture, because the Spirit leads us to do this, the Spirit says that to us, etc. Calvin is saying, in that sense the Anabaptists and the Roman Catholics, as different as they are in outward appearance, turn out to be the same opponent.

Now, I don't care right now whether Calvin's right or wrong historically; I believe he was [right]. But I want you to see what this says about Calvin's understanding and perception of the Reformation. What was the Reformation all about? If he says the Anabaptists, because they subordinate the Word of God to their subjective understanding of the Spirit, and the Roman Catholics who subordinate the Word of God to their church tradition and papal infallibility; if they are equally our opponent, then what is the singular issue of the Reformation? *Sola scriptura*-getting back to the ^v/ Scriptures as our source of religious truth.

Well that's an aside from this...

Audience question: *** inaudible ***...the Anabaptists concept or whatever you want to call it, um, be today?

Well, various parts of the church reflect anabaptism. Yes, in fact, I think in one real sense the spirit of Protestant Christianity in our country is more Anabaptist than anything else in our day and age. Elements of it show up in the Pentecostal movement obviously with their emphasis upon continuing charismatic messages from God. Elements show up in what we call the Baptist churches today in their emphasis upon baptizing only adults so that you have a pure church, allegedly. Their understanding of independency and their understanding of piety, and then elements of it don't just appear, but are historically traceable to the Anabaptists in such movements as the Mennonites, the Brethren of Christ, and others like that who are all Anabaptist in their background.

Audience comment: Mostly Baptist churches also practice re-baptism as well.

Yeah, which is exactly *Anabaptism* means; to baptize over again. And the reason they did that is because they said you can't have a pure church if you baptize infants; you should only baptize those who profess faith in Christ. So they re-baptized infants who had been baptized and got the name Anabaptists.

Well let's...go ahead.

Audience: What is catabaptist?

Same thing. It's just instead of using the...what is is? Catabaptist would be the Greek suffix rather than the Latin, yeah.

Okay. What's happening while Calvin's in Strasbourg? Back in Geneva (kinda like, now back at the ranch) the city council, which had expelled Calvin, had made a treaty to surrender the independence of the city of Geneva to the city of Bern. Whoa! If you know anything about Swiss mentality, which was,

way back even before two hundred years before where we're talking about, *fiercely* independent. And so when the city leaders have sold out the people to now subject themselves to the city leaders of Bern, in the elections that followed, the people of Geneva defeated those who had negotiated the treaty and condemned them formally as traitors. And then they begged Calvin to return. How do you like that? Having been banished from the city of Geneva, they now are begging him to return. And Calvin resists doing it until he's prevailed upon overwhelmingly in September of 1541.

Now, at this point I want to back up. We've been kinda summarizing and discussing. I want to let Calvin put all this in his own words. It's really interesting. In his preface to the commentary on the Psalms, Calvin describes in his own words his life from the time of his sudden conversion until he returns to Geneva as a man who had been previously banished. And notable in this, watch, is his confessed desire to retire away from the public life to study in private all along. Now, I'm going to ask you a question for discussion and see if we get the right answer. Why? You know.. .you pick up the corpus of Calvin's writings and you say, where does Calvin reflect autobiographically in his life? This would really be interesting to us. Listen. Why do we go to the preface to his commentary on the Psalms? Why there? Well, Calvin's in the midst of explaining why the Psalms are so precious to him when he gets into his autobiographical remarks, because he sees himself following, as an unworthy, but nevertheless following in the steps of David who was constantly betrayed by men, even by his closest friends, and so he sees in the experience of David, and the rejection of David, and how the Lord has to win battles for David, a small glint of his own experience. He really... Calvin's heart is really wanned to the Psalms for that reason. And it's in that preface that he tells us so much about his life, and I want to take a minute or two to read what he says. It says:

My condition, no doubt, is much inferior to his [David's], and it is unnecessary for me to stay to show this. But as he was taken from the sheepfold and elevated to the rank of supreme authority, so God, having taken me from my originally obscure and humble condition, has reckoned me worthy of being invested with the honorable office of a preacher and minister of the gospel. When I was as yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who followed it to wealth, this prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy and was put to the study of law. To this pursuit I endeavored faithfully to apply to myself in obedience to the will of my father, but God by the secret guidance of his providence at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected for one in my early period of life.

My friends, that's the only sentence in the whole corpus of Calvin where he tells you anything about his conversion. I'll read it again; he says, "I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, [so] God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame."

Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness, I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, I yet pursued them with less ardor. I was quite surprised to find that, before a year had elapsed, all who had any desire after purer doctrine were continually coming to me to learn, although I myself was as yet but a mere novice in tyro *** not sure about prev word? ***. Being of a disposition somewhat unpolished and bashful, which lead me always to love the shade in retirement, I then began to seek some secluded corner where I might be withdrawn from the public view, but so far from being able to accomplish the object of my desire, all my retreats were like public schools. In short, whilst my one great object was to live in seclusion without being known, God so led me about through different turnings and changes that he never permitted me to rest in any place, until in spite of my natural disposition he brought me forth to public notice. Leaving my native country France, I, in fact,

retired into Germany expressly for the purpose of being able there to enjoy in some obscure corner the repose which I had always desired, and which had been so long denied me. But lo, while I lay hidden at Basil, and know only to a few people, many faithful and holy persons were burnt alive in France. And the report of these burnings, having reached foreign nations, they excited the strongest disapprobation among a great part of the Germans. His indignation was kindled against the authors of such tyranny. In order to allay this indignation, certain wicked and lying pamphlets were circulated stating that none were treated with such cruelty but Anabaptists and seditious persons, who by their perverse ravings and false opinions were overthrowing not only religion but also all civil order. Observing that the object which these instruments of the court aimed at by their disguises was not only that the disgrace of shedding so much innocent blood might remain buried under the false charges and calumnies which they brought against the holy martyrs after their death, but also that afterwards they might be able to proceed to the utmost extremity in murdering the poor saints without exciting compassion towards them in the breast of any. It appeared to me that unless I opposed them to the utmost of my ability, my silence could not be vindicated from the charge of cowardice and treachery. This was the consideration which induced me to publish my *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. (A sentence I'll come back to the next time we're together.) My objects were first approved that these reports were false and calumnious (I'm not pronouncing that right). And thus to vindicate my brethren whose death was precious in the sight of the Lord, and next that at the same cruelties might very soon after be exercised against many and happy individuals, foreign nations might be touched with at least some compassion towards them and solicitude about them. When it was then published it was not that copious and labored work which it is now, but only a small treatise containing a summary of the principle truths of the Christian religion, and it was published with no other design than that men might know what was the faith held by those whom I saw basely and wickedly defamed by those prodigious and perfidious flatterers. That my object was not to acquire fame appeared from this that immediately after I left Basil, and particularly from the fact that nobody knew that I was the author. Wherever else I have gone I have take care to conceal that I was the author of that performance, and I have resolved to continue in the same privacy and obscurity until at length William Carol became me at Geneva, not so much by council and exhortation as by dreadful importation which I felt to be as if God had from heaven laid his mighty hand upon me to arrest me. As the most direct road to Strasbourg to which I then intended to retire was shut up by the wars, I had resolved to pass quickly by Geneva without staying longer than a single night in that city. A little before this popery had been driven from it by exertions of the excellent person whom I have named in Peter Veray *** sp? ***. But matters were not yet brought a settled state, and the city was divided into unholy and dangerous factions. Then an individual who now basely apostacized and returned to the papists discovered me and made me know to others. Upon this, Ferrule, who burned with an extraordinary zeal to advance the gospel, immediately strained every nerve to detain me. And after having learned that my heart was set upon devoting myself to private studies for which I wished to keep myself free from other pursuits, and finally that he gain nothing by entreaties, he proceeded to utter an importation that God would curse my retirement and the tranquillity of the studies which I sought if I should withdraw and refuse to give assistance when the necessity was so urgent. By this importation, I was so stricken with terror, that I detested from the journey that I had undertaken, but sensible of my natural bashfulness and timidity, I would not bring myself under obligation to discharge any particular office. After that, four months had scarcely elapsed when, on the one hand, the Anabaptists began to assail us, and on the other, a certain wicked apostate, who being secretly supported by the influence of some of the magistrates of the city, was thus enabled to give us a great deal of trouble. At the same time, a succession of dissensions fell out of the city which strangely afflicted us. Being as I acknowledged naturally of a timid, soft, and placilimous disposition, I was compelled to encounter these violent tempests and part of my early training. And although I did not sink under them, yet I was not sustained by such greatness of mind as not to rejoice more than it became me, when in consequence of certain commotion, I was banished from Geneva.

(Chuckle) He says, I know I shouldn't feel this way, but it kinda felt good to have...

Audience: It sounds like at some point in his life then he has lost some enthusiasm for his work because he said it becomes laborious.

To be in Geneva. Because everybody.. it was so hard-Catholics on one hand, Anabaptists and libertines on the other, the city council fighting the church, and all this. And he didn't even want this. He says, I didn't want this job! And so he was glad to leave.

By this means set at liberty and loosed from the tie of my vocation I resolved to live in a private station free from the burden and cares of any public charge. When that most excellent servant of Christ, Martin Bucer, employing a similar kind of remonstrance and protestation as to which Ferrule had recourse before, drew me back to new station. Alarmed by the example of Jonas which he set before me I still contained...

(Chuckling) Audience: This guy's really...

Yeah, they... Calvin apparently.. they could really yank this guy's chain. He said just like Jonas fleeing away, so you're going to be like that. He said:

I continued in the work of teaching. And although I always continued, like myself, studiously avoiding celebrity, yet I was carried, I know not how, as it were by a force, to the imperial assemblies, where willing or unwilling I was under the necessity of appearing before the eyes of many. Afterwards when the Lord having compassion on this city, had allayed the hurtful agitation's and broils which prevailed in it, and by his wonderful power had defeated both the wicked councils and attempts of the disturbers of the republic, necessity was imposed upon me of returning to my former charge contrary to my desire and inclination. The welfare of this church, it is true, lay so near my heart that for its sake I would have not hesitated to lay down my life. But my timidity nevertheless suggested to me many reasons for excusing myself from again willingly taking upon my shoulders so heavy a burden. At length, however, a solemn and conscientious regard to my duty prevailed with me to consent to return to the flock from which I had been torn, but with what grief, tears, great anxiety, and distress I did this. The Lord is my best witness. And many godly persons, who would have wished to see me delivered from this painful state had it not been that that which I feared and which made me give my consent, prevented them from shut their mouths.

Well, he goes on to talk about the problems that he's had in Geneva too, but it's interesting. You note the heart of Calvin. He says, I would have willingly laid down my life for that congregation. But to go , back to Geneva? It took him a few more months to be pushed into that. But finally he did.

ry And so, being begged, Calvin returns to Geneva and lives out the rest of his life and ministry for twenty-V three years, and there he dies in Geneva on May 27, 1564. 1564-students of church history will

immediately recognize as the infamous year that the Tridenten *** sp? *** from Trent was published by Pope Pius IV. Trent finally got to its conclusions and published them in the year that Calvin died.

Well, there's much too much about those twenty-three years in Geneva to be covered systematically, and so I've just chosen a few insights and major issues of Calvin's life while he's in Geneva to talk to you about.

The first thing I note down here is the libertines. Calvin was fighting not only the Protestant Reformation against the Roman Catholics and not only trying to keep the Protestants from falling into the subjectivism and anarchy of the Anabaptists, but in the city of Geneva there were a party of libertines who were about as libertine as people today. Women proposing free love. People denying the existence of God. Proposing there is to be on government over us.

Audience: Was that unique to Geneva *** inaudible *** or was it like that anywhere at that time?

* Well, I would imagine you could find traces of that in just about all the major cities of Europe, but Geneva seems to have had a strong *party* of people, not just libertine ideas, but people who actually called themselves the party of the libertines. And so these were a constant problem to Calvin. In fact, /they were his key opponents politically. The libertines are agitating continually in the city of Geneva * against Calvin. They sic their dogs on him when he walks down the street, and they raise all sorts of problems for him and it was a constant problem, believe me.

Audience: He didn't point any shotguns outside of his window?


Yeah. They...

Audience: He died in 1564?

That's right, 1564.

Audience: How old was he at that time?

what? Fifty-five years old.

 May twenty-seventh. Well, he was born in 1509, so that would make him,

Another aspect of his life and ministry in Geneva that you would want to note in your notes is Calvin's ministry to exiles from many countries 'round about who fled to Geneva where, as John Knox put it, "One found the most perfect school of Christ there had ever been since the time of the apostles." John Knox was educated by John Calvin in the city of Geneva. He's, of course, the most illustrious of the many, but many came to Geneva because of the fame of Calvin. And when they were politically unwelcome in their own countries, Calvin gave them sanctuary and support there in the city of Geneva. You have the libertines, you have the exiles there to, of course, strengthen his hand.

'Urn, another aspect of his ministry and life in Geneva, I think, has to be mentioned, and that's the personal tragedies that Calvin went through. Dillenberger, in his own rehearsal of the life of Calvin, summarizes it very well. He says that,

Throughout this period Calvin also lived through personal tragedy in his own household.. In 1542 a son died in infancy, and Calvin's wife never regained her health. After eight and a half years of marriage she died, and Calvin, though never romantic (in our sense of the word anyway), grieved deeply, as his letters indicate. Throughout the Genevan period, Calvin's household was not without inhabitants and problems. Calvin's youngest brother, Antoine, had lived in the household since the original flight to Geneva. Antoine's wife was later found guilty of adultery with Calvin's manservant. Divorce was a result, and Antoine again married, and Calvin's house was filled now with children from both marriages. Calvin's stepdaughter, who had lived with Calvin and his wife in Geneva prior to her marriage, was also found guilty of adultery.

And so, a really rough family life as well: death, adultery, and you can be sure, given the absolute moral standards of Calvin, that was a real blow to him.

*** not sure if he's still quoting here *** Beyond the problems within his own household, Calvin was occupied in finding a place for the refugees who came to Geneva in increasing numbers. Most came from France, but also a considerable number from England and northern Italy. Indeed, approximately one-third of Geneva's inhabitants at one time were refugees. And whilst the greatest number came after Calvin's victory, the refugees who became citizens tipped the voting balance, assuring Calvin's role at the time of and in the light of the Servetus affair.

It is interesting that Calvin himself did not become a citizen until 1559, i.e., until five years before his

death, and that John Knox, the Scottish reformer was one of the refugees who became a citizen, as I've said, and referred to Geneva as the most perfect school of Christ that ever was in the earth since the days of the apostles.

Okay, so when you think of Geneva, you think of the Libertine Party, we think of the exiles, we think of the tragedies and Calvin's own life; losing his wife, losing his son, having his family torn by the scandal of adultery. In Geneva nevertheless, Calvin earned his fame as the foremost of the Protestant reformers, defending the truth of God's Word with a sincerity and personal zeal which makes, I think, the 20th century mentality uneasy. If you give the writings of Calvin, especially its polemical works, against his opponents and the Roman Catholics, you give these writings to most late 20th century people, they will find them very distasteful, because they are strongly worded. Emotionally expressed.

Question from the audience*** They are nothing like Luther's writings are they?

Answer*** They are not nearly as, how can I put it, nasty as Luther's writings. Luther at one point could say, "I could reply to this opponent, but why kick a dead dog," you know and stuff like that. I mean, Luther could really be cutting. But that fit into the German.

Comment from the audience*** Luther could say that sort of thing and I am not so much excusing Luther as putting it in context, to remind you that that was part of the German macho image of that day. I mean, if you got into an argument, you were supposed to really mix it up and make it interesting and make it entertaining. And so, Luther did. Calvin is not quite so colorful that way. But, Calvin is very heated, very. Most of the when I read it I think he is right, he is right on. It is from the heart, it is inflamed more than it is invective as I see it. Of course, I love Calvin and people will think that I am bending over backwards for him. But, I personally think that the 20th century has got more of the problem. When the 20th century mind reads Calvin, and says, "Oh, how distasteful." that is because the 20th century is such a laid back, relativistic, existential tolerant, self-indulgent age. And Calvin, ERRRgh, for the glory of Jesus Christ and for the truth of the gospel and when he saw anything in the way of that, he spoke out and he spoke very strongly. And we see this I think very well if we take an example, in his reply to the Council of Trent. Let me give a little background here on the Council of Trent. After a great deal of hesitation and many difficulties, Pope Paul III convened a church council at Trent in the year 1545, in order to counter and allegedly conciliate the perceived need for reform that was desired by the Protestants. Okay. "You Protestants think that the church needs to be, okay, here is a church council and we will tell you how we are going to reform the church and hopefully you will see that . we are interested in this too and in your errors we will correct you. The Council met for many years and s/in fact, the Council of Trent began in 1545 and continued until 1563. But that doesn't meet continuously. In 1547 it was postponed for four years due to an epidemic and it met for a brief time at Bologna. Pope Julius III reconvened it in 1551. But, in the year 1552, it was suspended again and this time for 10 full years due to revolts against Charles V and to the hatred of Pope Paul IV to all Protestant interests. You can't expect Pope Paul IV to reconvene the Council of Trent. He says, "The Protestants be damned, I don't care how to answer them." And so you wait until Pope Pious IV, oh I am sorry, Pope Pious IV, I will get it right. Pious IV, that is right. It was Paul IV who hated the Protestants and Pious IV who reassembled the Council in 1562, by which time conciliation with the Protestants is out of the question and the Jesuits had taken firm control of the Council. Okay. In 1547, the year after Luther died, Calvin wrote what was the first major Protestant response to the counter-reformation effort of the Roman Catholic Church at Trent. And he entitled what he wrote, *Antidote to the Council of Trent*. Where do you find an antidote? Only where people have been poisoned, right. And so *Antidote to the Council of Trent*. And with godly conviction, Calvin replied in detail to the various declarations from Trent and I can't go on and on. I only have to take a few illustration here.

Audience question: Do the Canon's of Dordt come in here somewhere?

No, that's a hundred years later. In the next century, those who remonstrate against the Calvinism of the

Netherlands churches, the Dutch churches, reply to in the Canons of Dordt what becomes the five points of Calvinism.

Audience question: What, as he says, was finished in the year Calvin died?

The *** Tridenten Confession (sp?) *** which was the final declaration of the Roman Catholic church from Trent. So this is a long drawn out period. In the midst of it, Calvin begins to write his *Antidote* to what has already taken place. And remember, there was a ten year pause there.

OK, so then in 1547, the year after Luther died, Calvin writes the first response to Trent and with godly conviction and in detail to the various declarations, he writes, for instance on Sola Scripture, "And so it ought to be that in order that our faith, instead of rashly subscribing to the naked decisions of men, may submit to God only." He writes on the horror of papal tyranny, "For with such *** dissolute (unsure of word used here) *** and unbridled license is the papal tyranny exercised and it is plain that both the doctrine and the whole administration of the papacy are so much at variance with the majority of ancient councils, that nothing more opposite can be imagined." "Behold the oracle that imposes religious obligations on the whole world. We, however, I presume, may with impunity despise it because we are aware of it being composed by such doctors and corrected by such an aristarchus. The proclamation of the council is entitled to no more weight than the cry of an auctioneer." Ha, ha, ha. He says, "and I hesitate not to ex ***break in the tape ***.

And he speaks of Paul HI being an alien from the body of Christ. "What even though he hold the primacy only like that of the devil among his angels. The appellation of universal bishop is conferred on a man." Gregory everywhere testifies to be blasphemous, nefarious, accursed, and the forerunner of antichrist. Calvin knows his fathers. He can go back to Gregory and say, "Gregory said it would be the antichrist who would take that title." He says, "This man is no more like a bishop than a wolf is like a lamb. It is little to say that there is nothing Episcopal in him but while he is the declared enemy of Christ and the church."

*** Side one of tape ends ***

"After this prelude, what might he not think himself at liberty to do. Accordingly, he hesitates not to strip Christ in order that he may deck his pope with the spoils. The pope, he says came a light into the world. "Blasphemous mouth, will you apply to that fetid monster of your sacred terms avicable none but the Son of God?" You see, it is strong language but why? He says, "Because the Pope is trying to take the place of my Savior Jesus Christ." And so, he doesn't, he doesn't spare words.

Question from the audience*** inaudible.

Answer ***He says, "Oh, good Father, how much better were it for you to be a man of sense than to sign out your pivot in favor, not only of a dead man, but of a fatal, pestiferious monster. As to your proclaiming him worthy of heaven, I don't know if you are aware of the universal belief that he was unworthy of the earth."

Laugh from the audience* **Unworthy of Satan. Was he referring to the earth, as in the property of Satan?

Answer** Well, either that or just saying that he should not have been alive. Okay, and then on a doctrinal point, many things could obviously be taken here, but on justification by faith, Calvin writes in his *Antidote*, these words: "Here is what the Council of Trent had said, "If anyone saith that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins to the exclusion of the grace and charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them or even that by the grace whereby we are justified is only the favor of God, let him be anathema."

Now, understand, next time you know, you hear Protestants talking about how Catholics don't have that great a difference, Catholic doctrine declares that if you believe in justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, you are anathema. You are justified by that as well as by a righteousness or a grace of God infused in you. So that something inherent in me justifies me in addition to the work of Christ. Now that is Canon Eleven of Trent said and Calvin replies: "I wish the reader to understand that as often as we mention faith alone in this question, we are not thinking of a dead faith, which worketh not by love, but holding faith to be the only cause of justification. It is therefore faith alone which justifies and yet the faith which justifies is not alone. Just as it is the heart, I am sorry, just as it is the heat alone of the sun which warms the earth and yet it is the, yet in the sun it is not alone. Because it is constantly conjoined with light. Wherefore we do not separate the whole grace of regeneration from faith but claim the power and faculty of justifying entirely for faith as we ought. And yet it is not us that these Tridentan Fathers anathematize so much as Paul to whom we owe the definition of the righteousness of man consists in the forgiveness of sins." And then he goes on to quote scripture after scripture. What he says that they think that they are condemning us and in fact they are condemning Paul and the Apostles.

Okay, you see, this is his *Antidote to the Council of Trent*. But I want to read something else to you that I think you will find fairly spicy. In his 1551 dedication on his commentary on First and Second Peter, he dedicated it to Edward VI of England by the way, Calvin excoriated the Romanist corruption of the Word of God calling down the dreadful hypocrisies and heroics of Trent and with all his heart asserted the need for reform in his day. And so this is going to take a few moments but I think it is really worth it to hear what Calvin has to say about the Council of Trent. "Indeed, if there has ever been a time when the truth of God needed to be freely and boldly maintained, it has never been more necessary than in the present day as all can see. Leading out the atrocious cruelties shown everywhere towards its professors and omitting also all those machinations by which Satan fights against it, here the hidden traps, there with open force of arms, there are places in which the pure doctrine of religion lately prevailed but where now the satellites of the Roman anti-christs by their spurious maltreatment, mocked Christ as though they again gave a reed into His hand instead of a scepter and placed a crown of thorns on His head. When these crafty corrupters hoped that the purity of the gospel will be gradually extinguished, how cowardly are those who connive at these mockeries offered to Christ when they ought rather to have hazarded their life a hundred times than to redeem it for a very short time by their perfidious silence." Calvin says, "It is not a time to be quiet." "In the meantime to complete the last tragedy of crucifying the Son of God, the Pope himself is said to have summoned again his own masked council. Though he marches with his savage band of robbers to obliterate the name of Christ and to strangle His Church, yet every kind of council is to him as a sacred sword forged from ritual of sacrifice. Thus when Paul III resolved to kill and destroy all who preferred to defend the truth to their own life, he made a show at Trent of that odious specter though disguised in fine colors so that he might put an end to the gospel, as it were, by a crack of doom. But when the good fathers had begun to dazzle the eyes of the simple by the gleams of the various sessions, all that preparation vanished in smoke by a secret and sudden blast from the holy seat, except that for the purpose of continuing the terror, a little cloud rested for a time on Bologne."

/ What he is saying here is that that epidemic that broke out in Trent that put an end to the Council, he says, is the judgment of God against these people.

"Julius his successor, who had performed his part for the first time at Trent is said to be girding himself now for the stratagem," I am going to skip this Council. He goes on to talk about how the Pope is having a hard time deciding whether to recall the Council. And he says that the reason they are so afraid is that if they really had an ecumenical council and had all the Christians represented there, their doctrines would be blasted to hell and they know they would be. And so what they had to have is that the pope have his little puppets come in and finally speak only what he wants them to. Um, this line is good: "The three half-penny bishops, of whom there will be a vast abundance, will fly together from all Italy. From France and Spain too there will come some of the light headed and fatuous men and other infamous with the likes of their former life who will later return home boasting that they had rendered a good and faithful service to the Catholic Church. From all the caves of the monks there will come forth a great

conflux of frogs to that marsh, who by their eager croaking will banish far away every truth. What, do I imagine here a new thing or do I not rather correctly describe the assembly which lately was seen at Trent?"

Comment from the audience* **inaudible. If we wrote that way about our enemies, our worst opposition would come from some fellow Christians, because we wouldn't be being loving. Calling Russia an evil empire is nothing to what Calvin.

If Calvin had been here, I tell you, it would scorch the boundaries of Russia with his word.

Comments from the audience***inaudible.

Let me continue. "Why is it then that the Pope is afraid of these guardians of his own throne, who are all in the first place his own servants and slaves, and who in the second place seek nothing but to gain by any means, his favor." He goes on like that. "When this prince of impiety so wickedly tramples upon the glory of our God and the salvation, does it become us by our silence to betray this sacred cause? Certainly not. We ought to undergo a hundred deaths if that were possible rather than suffer such unworthy, wicked and barbarous oppression of sound doctrine to continue unknown through our y^l cowardice."

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You know, I feel like sometimes reading that over and over again to Christians today. He says, "We should die one hundred times rather than be silent when the truth of God's Word is being suppressed." "But let us grant what is hardly credible that the pope and his band be seriously intend to call a council. In that case, Christ will not at first sight be assailed by such crude mockery. Indeed the greater the fame of the seriousness and splendor of the papal council, the more harmful will it be to the church and the more dreadful pest it will prove. It cannot possibly be hoped that an assembly which is assembled under the authority of anti-Christ, will be governed by the Spirit of God or that the slaves of Satan will exercise any moderation. In the first place, who is the professed and sworn enemy of Christ would occupy the chief place of authority." And he goes on to rail upon the pope. "However, I am not unjust as not to concede that some of these of a sounder judgment are not otherwise ill disposed, but they do not possess enough courage to dare to resist the wickedness of the whole body." He says, "I know there will be some true Christians who go to the Council, but they won't be heard and they will know that if they want to keep their lives, they will have to be quiet." "They will be cast into prison, they will presently be driven to a recantation, they will have to pay the penalty of death for too much freedom of speech. Or they will have to drink the cup of perpetual silence. Such is the justice with which we are treated that we are untameable and hopelessly perverse heretics unless we seek from the holy council the rules for proper reformation. And unless we accept without delay its decrees whatever they may be. We have already given sufficient evidence by clear proofs that we do not shun the authority of a legitimate council, if such could be had. But when they require that we are to bow to the judgment of the chief adversary of Christ without any appeal and indeed on condition that they should define religion at their will and pleasure and not by the Word of God, what sense is there in submission unless we are prepared willingly and knowingly to deny Christ? There is no reason for anyone to object that we distrust them before the time. Let them give us a Council in which we shall be given free liberty to speak in defense of the cause of truth and if we refuse to come to that and to give a reason for all that we have done, then will justly charge us with pitumousy. But, so far from permission being given to us to speak and express our feelings clearly, there is no doubt that we shall be prevented from making even a suitable defense. How can they listen to the clear sounding thunders of truth when their ears cannot bear warnings however mild and conveyed in soft whispers. They publicly do this. They invite us. Is it so that they may grant us someplace of the lowest seats? Nay, they declare that it is not lawful to admit anyone to their sitting except the anointed and the mitred. They let them sit while we stand provided we are heard declaring the truth. They answered that they freely promise a hearing, that is, that where we have presented a suppliant petition and are then ordered once after some days of turbulent clamors, we shall be recalled for the purpose of being condemned. I say, clamor, not that there will be any altercation and dissonance in that assembly. But

that the sacred ears of bishops will be so irreverently offended by us that the indignity will appear to them intolerable. It is well-known how tumultuous their violence is. Surely a reasonable determination of a cause can never be obtained from them but even a slight hearing can be held for. We shall endeavor to restore God's worship to its purity and to purge it from the innumerable superstitions by which it has been corrupted. Here the profane orators will chatter about nothing but the institutions and the old rights and ceremonies of the fathers until the church which has been taught by the celestial ministry of the prophets and of Christ knew no other way of worshipping God than by a adopting by animal stupidity the dregs of Romulus made fascinating by the old wives of Numa Popilius. Where is that simplicity of obedience which the Lord everywhere demands and so distinctly requires? Yet the controversy be concerning the depravity of human nature, the miserable and lost state of mankind, the grace and power of Christ, are the free ground our salvation, they will immediately bring forward the rotten axioms of the schools as mandatory and as things that ought to be received without dispute. The Holy Spirit teaches us in Scripture that our mind is smitten with such blindness that the affections of our heart are so depraved and perverted that our whole nature is so vitiated that we can do nothing but sin until He forms a new will within us. He constrains us who are condemned to eternal death, to renounce all confidence in our own works and to flee to the mercy of God as our only asylum. And to trust in Him for all our righteousness. By inviting us to God, He also testifies that God is reconciled to us only through the merits of the blood of Christ and bids us to rely on Christ's intercession and to come boldly to the heavenly judgment seat. Those endless decrees are past so that none of these things may be heard and to violate them as deemed more unlawful than to deny God and all His angels. They do not permit a word to be said about the sacraments that differs from the notions they entertain. What is this but to preclude the possibility of any reformation? It is easy to show how preposterous and perverted is the administration of the sacraments under the papacy so that hardly anything bears any resemblance to the genuine doctrine of Christ."

He goes on to talk about the disgraceful sacrileges that had come into the church and the superstitions. "Since we see that these antichrists rush on with desperate perniciousness in order to destroy sound doctrine and with equal influence boldly boast that they will set up a mass council for no other purpose than that they may put the gospel to flight and then sing songs of triumph their own victory.

Let us also, in our turn, gather courage to put on the armor of truth and to follow the banner of our leader. If only the pure and simple darkness of Scripture were to shine forth as it ought, everyone who does not refuse to open his eyes would acknowledge the papacy to be a savage and inexorable monster made up through Satan's arts of innumerable massive errors. We make it evident by the most solid proofs that the glory of God is so scattered by sacrilegious rending among fictitious idols that hardly a hundredth portion of his right remain to him. Further, if they do reserve for him some portion of worship, we can show that no part of it is sincere but that it is also of the superstitious inventions of man and that the Law of God is also overwhelmed with similar devices. We bear testimony that miserable consciences are held bound under the yoke of man rather than ruled by God's commandment and as they groan and toil under the unjust burden of so many traditions and are oppressed with a cruel tyranny, we declare the prevaricating obedience can be of no avail except to lead men to a deeper labyrinth.

We show clearly from Scripture that Christ's power under the papacy is almost abolished and that his grace is in a great measure made void; that unhappy souls are torn away from him and inflated with fatal confidence in their own power and works. We prove that prayer to God, such as is prescribed by his Word, which is the only true refuge for salvation, is wholly subverted. We show plainly that the sacraments are adulterated partly by extraneous inventions and partly also transferred to a foreign purpose in that the power of the Spirit is impiously tied to them, and what is peculiar to Christ is ascribed to them. Then we disown the number seven which they have presumptuously adopted (the number of sacraments). We have proved that the mass which they imagine to be a sacrifice, is a disgraceful denial of the sacrifice of Christ and we make it clear that they are guilty of many other sacrifices besides.

If only Scripture were allowed its own authority, there is none of these things about which our

adversaries would not be compelled to be silent. This is what they, in fact, admit when they contend that owing to the ambiguous meaning of Scripture, we ought to stand solely on the judgment of the Church who, I pray, does not see that by laying aside the word of God the whole right of defining things is thus transferred to them. Though they may kiss the closed copies of the Scripture as a kind of worship, yet when they charge it with being obscure and ambiguous, they allow it no more authority than if not a single word of it existed in writing. Let them assume specious titles as they please so that they do not appear to introduce anything apart from the dictates of the Spirit as they are accustomed to boast. Yet, they are firm and settled in their view. Their will alone is *** *auto fistos* (not sure of latin?? spelling) ***. It establishes the faith itself and all other reasons are bidden good-bye. In case the faithful are carried about by every wind of imposture, in case they should be exposed to the crafty scoffings of the ungodly, let them be taught by the sure experience of faith and know that nothing is more firm or certain than the teaching of Scripture, and on that support let them confidently rest. Since we see that it is shamefully deformed by the false comments of the sophist and that today the hired rabble of the pope are bent on this stratagem in order to obscure the light of their smoke, it is right for us to be more intent on restoring its brightness.

In an especial manner, I have resolved to devote myself to this work as long as I live if time and opportunity are afforded me. In the first place, the church to which I belong shall thus receive the fruit of this labor, so that it may hereafter continue longer. For even if only a small portion of time remains to me from the duties of my office, yet that however small it may be, I have determined to devote to this kind of writing."

Well, that is the kind of man Calvin was. And his *Antidote to Trent* and his reply here is prefaced to the commentaries on 1 and 2 Peter in which he calls down the Council of Trent, sets him out as the first Protestant reformer to reply. And of course, he was very strong as you have heard.

What else did he do in Geneva? I need to hurry along here to a conclusion. Calvin established the Presbyterian Church Order in Geneva and became then the model that Knox took away and developed into what becomes Presbyterian government in the Presbyterian Church as it is brought to our country. Calvin drew up that Presbyterian Church Order and did so in order to defend the session's right to excommunicate instead of the city council. The city council threatened him upon death. When the city /council entered the worship services to take the Lord's Supper and to dispense it to whom they will, Calvin and Farrell stood at the communion table and dared them physically, to try to take the elements out of them. They said, "This is the Church of Christ and authority in this Church resides in the session of the elders, not in the city council." And so Calvin you see, is really historically, for all the abuse that we who are modern day Calvinists take because we allegedly do not believe in the separation of church and state, Calvin is the father of that notion: that there is a separate government in the church and a separate government in the state.

Calvin founded the Geneva Academy during these years which turned out to be the first Protestant university anywhere and called as its first rector, Beze, or Beze, pronounced a number of ways, Beza is its spelling.

Now, one last thing about Calvin's time in Geneva which obviously cannot be overlooked and that is that Calvin broke the power of his opponents who favored Cervetus, who then died in Geneva as an international criminal. If Calvin was known for anything throughout the history of Western world since

except for the doctrine of predestination, it is because he is the man who allegedly killed Cervetus^ Cervetus becomes the, I mean he is exalted as the martyr, you know, to intolerance, that was

displayed by the Protestant reformers, Calvin being the most wicked and cruel and heartless of them all. I had originally thought I would collect some of the things that are said about Calvin and read them to you, but they are so depressing to me I decided I could not even bear it. I mean, miserable things are said about Calvin in the Cervetus affair, and so let me just set the record straight for a moment and tell a little bit about Cervetus.

Cervetus was a physician and I guess a fairly talented one. But, he also aspired to be a philosopher and a theologian. He hated the Christian faith. He considered the doctrine of the deity of the Christ absolutely preposterous and he ridiculed the doctrine of the trinity as a "three-headed monster." Cervetus and his writings had been condemned in half a dozen major cities by both Protestants and Catholic councils. Well, council is not the right word. But, authorities had put out warrants for this man's arrest and his death for blasphemy against the Most High God. This is the kind of man Cervetus was. Cervetus had no business in Geneva at all. And no matter what his defenders may say, you have to ask yourself, "Why does Cervetus end up in Geneva?" Cervetus all along had been egging to get a debate with Calvin. To put Calvin in his place, because he recognized that Calvin is a leading reformer and defender of the truth which Cervetus hated. Well, Cervetus is discovered in church in Geneva and he is arrested. The session of Calvin's church, Christ Church, where Calvin is the minister, have Cervetus arrested by the civil authorities. Okay, now remember, Cervetus has a death warrant on his head throughout Europe. He is finally found in Geneva. And so, he is brought before the city council of Geneva. He is going to be tried. Calvin almost daily went to Cervetus' cell to convert him, to constantly bid him to renounce his heresies and become a Christian. Calvin went to the city council and pled with them that if they were going to execute him, they should be humane about it. Now, it will do you no good in this day and age to blame the execution of heretics and blasphemers of the 16th centuries, on Calvin. That was a practice that the Roman Catholic Church had for centuries before that. That did not come with Calvin. The Protestants practiced the same thing. And while I personally do not believe that heresy is a capital offense, blasphemy is. And for that, Cervetus, I think should have been executed. Calvin, however, is not the one who wanted Cervetus executed. Calvin simply defended that as being what the Word of God taught. By the way, that is one of the ways in which it ought to be very clear to people that Calvin was a theonomist too. He believed in the authority of the OT law in its civil sanction because when he wrote a defense of Geneva in the Cervetus affair, he went to the OT to defend what they had done. Now, the city council of Geneva sought the advice of other city councils, all of which said that Cervetus should be burned at the stake. Calvin intervened and plead that they would do it in a more humane way. If they were to execute him, let him be beheaded so that his suffering would be minimal, okay. And so, Calvin, in the first place took the right position. Blasphemers should be executed. Calvin, in the second place, was humane and Christian about it, seeking his conversion, asking the city council to be humane about the way they treated this man. Calvin is not the one who originally convicted Cervetus and put the death warrant on his head. He was wanted everywhere in Europe and he would have been treated much worse than he was in Geneva. Now, for all of that, Calvin did play an active part. When it came to convicting Cervetus of his theological errors Calvin was his chief opponent. And Calvin took his writings and his statements and showed them to be contrary to the Word of God and to be blasphemous. Um, so that too must be remembered in Calvin's period in Geneva.

Let me rehearse real quickly what we have said about the time in Geneva. I have brought up Calvin's opposition by the libertines, his help to the exiles from other countries who had come to him as a key reformer, the personal tragedies in his life. His taking on fame as the foremost of the Protestant reformers, replying to the Council of Trent in particular. His developing the Presbyterian Church Order and insisting on the separation of church and state, his founding of the first Protestant university and finally breaking the power of his opponents who had favored Cervetus. By the way, the libertines thought that Cervetus was great. They saw that Cervetus was going to be their half-man to go in there and break the power of Calvin in Geneva and he would be run out again.

¶ In 1559, the third and final edition of the *Institutes* was published by Calvin. I will repeat this later, but you might be interested to tonight, it^{as} ^{fiyelirnesjaj^erjhan} the first ^{dition} Calvin revises the way I do. When he revises, it gets bigger and bigger and bigger. By the time of his death Calvin had written commentaries on nearly every book of the Bible. So, he had time not only to do city affairs. I understand that he was, he put a hand to helping plan the aqueduct system in the city of Geneva. Not only took on the city council, not only reformed the government of the church, not only fought the libertines and the Anabaptists and wrote polemic works and wrote the greatest theology of the Reformation period, but

commentaries on nearly every book of the Bible. The man was a very hard worker. And I think a fitting conclusion tonight would be to refer you to Calvin's coat of arms, quite a tribute to his character. If you have ever seen a picture of Calvin's Coat of Arms, it shows an outstretched hand holding a heart and around it is written, "My heart for Thy cause, I offer Thee, promptly and sincerely." The outstretched hand with the heart saying, "God, I offer you my heart, sincerely and promptly for whatever cause to which You will put it."

Question from the audience ****inaudible***

Answer: I think there are many people who wanted Calvin to come back because they saw him as the opponent of the city council that had sold Geneva to become a subject of Bern. Yes, and so I, really there is little doubt about that. That is not so much an interpretation. Many people did not care so much for his theology, but they knew that he would be a man who would stand up against these guys. They wanted him back. But, on the other hand, what did I say, about one third of the city at one point was refugees who had come to study under Calvin? They certainly understood. Yeah, they turned out to be the swing vote on crucial affairs for Calvin. That is true.

Question from the audience. Didn't Calvin suffer from ill health?

Answer: That is something I could have brought up. He had terrible stomach problems, hemorrhoids, arthritis. It is just amazing the things he went through. By the way Calvin preached

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