



John Calvin's *Institutes in the Christian Religion* (1541)

A PPA Seminar: Fall 2017

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Study 9: Chapter Five: Repentance

Read pgs. 295-349

“The essence of repentance is that, taking leave of ourselves, we turn to God, and forsaking our former thoughts and intentions, we adopt new ones.” “Repentance is a spiritual rebirth whose goal is the restoration of God’s image which was obscured and almost erased in us by Adam’s transgression.”

Prayer: “May the LORD grant that we may be engaged in the mysteries of His Heavenly wisdom with a true increase of piety, for His glory, and for our edification. Amen.”

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12-13; Jeremiah 4:1-4; Matthew 3:1-2, 7-12; 4:17; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 2:38-39; 3:19-20; 17:30-31; 20:21; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11; Revelation 2:5; 3:19-20

1. Why does Calvin think it is important that faith produces repentance or that faith must precede repentance? List and define the two parts to repentance, as well as the two kinds of repentance that Calvin mentions. How does Calvin formally define repentance? [pgs. 295-302]

2. If one truly possesses saving faith and repentance, what are some specific fruits of attitude and behavior that will be observed in the believer’s life? According to your careful reading of Calvin, can you honestly say before God that you possess genuine faith and true repentance as far as you can judge your own heart? [pgs. 299-302]

3. How is repentance really a synonym for the Christian life in Calvin’s theology? Explain in your own words? How might this understanding of repentance be different from many modern evangelicals today? Briefly explain. [pgs. 301-304]

4. How has repentance been poorly understood by formal Roman Catholic teaching? Why is it so important to get repentance right? How does Roman Catholic theology divide repentance into three parts? Briefly define each part. [pgs. 305-32]
 - i. _____
 - ii. _____
 - iii. _____

5. According to Calvin, how are sins to be confessed according to the Bible's teaching? To Whom ultimately should sins be confessed? What is the role of the Church in the confession of sins according to Scripture? [pgs. 313-26]

6. What does Calvin say are the power of the keys given to the Church in his understanding of Scripture? What are two ways this power is made manifest in a local congregation? How is the Holy Spirit involved in the use of the keys? How has Rome particularly abused this power and privilege? [pgs. 320-26]

7. Briefly summarize Roman Catholic theology's teaching on indulgences and the Treasury of Merit? Are these scriptural teachings? Why, or why not? Why does Calvin include these in his chapter on repentance? [pgs. 326-29]
 - i. Indulgences:

 - ii. Treasury of Merit:

8. According to Roman Catholic theology, what are the two distinctions or categories of sin? Can there be forgiveness for either of these? If so, how can forgiveness be obtained? Can a believer ever reach a place of peace of conscience and assurance before God in this life? Why, or why not? [pgs. 333-49]

9. Articulate a biblical doctrine of forgiveness of sins by understanding Christ the Savior as both a "ransom" and "sacrifice" for sinners. What is the important distinction between punishment and discipline in Calvin's theology? Does Calvin believe assurance is important and possible for each believe? [pgs. 335-40]

10. Is Purgatory a biblical doctrine? Explain why, or why not [pgs. 345-49]

11. Thoughtful Meditation/Ponder: After prayerfully reading this chapter in full, answer these two questions: (1) How might our "default mode" as believers tend more toward the Roman Catholic theology than Calvin's biblical theology? Being aware of this, how can this help us to be more watchful and joyous in the Gospel? (2) What are the practical benefits of understanding God's Fatherly discipline in the believer's life?