

Lane, Anthony. *A Reader's Guide to Calvin's Institutes* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

Book 1 The Knowledge of God the Creator

1. Introduction and Prefatory Address
2. 1. 1-4 Knowing God and Ourselves
3. 1.5.1-4, 6-15 God Revealed in Creation
4. 1.6-7; 1.8.1, 13; 1.9 The Bible and the Holy Spirit
5. 1:11.1-5, 12; 1.13.2-3, 6-7, 16-20 Idolatry and the Trinity
6. 1.14.13-18, 20-22; 1.15.1-4, 7-8 The Created World and Humanity as Created
7. 1.16; 1.17.1-11 God's Sovereign Providence

Book 2: The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ: First Disclosed in the Fathers under the Law and Then to Us in the Gospel

8. 2.1.1-3, 6, 8-10; 2.2.7, 12, 15 18, 22; 2.3.3-5 Original Sin
9. 2.3.6-7, 10-11; 2.5.1-7, 14-15 How God Works in the Human Heart
10. 2.6.1, 4; 2.7.1-8, 10-15 The Place of the Law
11. 2.8.1-6, 8, 28-34, 51-55 Exposition of the Moral Law
12. 2.9.1-4; 2.10.1-5; 2.11.1, 4, 7, 9-11 Relation between the Old and New Testaments
13. 2.12.1-3; 2.13.1, 4; 2.14.1-4 The Person of Jesus Christ
14. 2.15.1, 3-4, 6; 2.16.1-7, 10-11, 13-19 The Redemptive Work of Jesus Christ

Book 3 The Way in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ: What Benefits Come to Us from It, and What Effects Follow

15. 3.1.1, 4; 3.2.6-7, 10-11 14-19, 22-24, 36 Saving Faith
16. 3.3.1-12, 14, 19-20 Regeneration and Repentance
17. 3.6; 3.7.1-2, 4-10 The Christian Life: Self-Denial
18. 3.8.1-7; 3.9; 3.10.1-5 The Christian Life: Bearing Our Cross and Attitude towards This Life
19. 3.11.1-2, 7, 16-17 21, 23; 3.12.1-2, 4-8; 3.13.3; 3.14.1-4 Justification by Faith
20. 3.14.9-11, 18-19, 21; 3.16; 3.17.3, 8-10 The Value of Our Good Works
21. 3.19.1-5, 7-15 The True Nature of Christian Freedom
22. 3.20.1-14 Prayer
23. 3.21.1-3, 7; 3.22.1-3, 7, 11; 3.23.1-3, 5, 7-8 Election and Reprobation
24. 3.24.4-8, 15-17; 3.25.1-3, 6, 10, 12 Predestination and the Final Resurrection

Book 4 The External Means of Aids By Which God Invites Us into the Society of Christ and Holds Us Therein

25. 4.1.1, 4-17, 21-22 The True Church
26. 4.2.1-2, 9-12; 4.3.1-9 The Roman Church and the Christian Ministry
27. 4.8 The Authority of the Church
28. 4.11.1-3, 5; 4.12.1-11 Church Discipline
29. 4.14.1, 3-9, 12, 14-17, 19-20, 23 The Sacraments in General
30. 4.15.1-6, 13-15; 4.16.1-9, 17, 19-22 Baptism and Infant Baptism
31. 4.17.1-5, 8-11, 16, 19, 21, 24, 26, 31-33 The Lord's Supper
32. 4.20.1-4, 6, 8-9, 14-16, 22-25, 30-32 Civil Government

The programme

Week 1 Introduction and purpose of *Institutes*

1. Introduction and Prefatory Address

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (London: SCM, 1961).

Lane, Anthony. *A Reader's Guide to Calvin's Institutes* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

Week 2 Book I: *Sensus Divinitatis*: Knowing God and Ourselves and the Revelation in Creation

2. 1. 1-4 Knowing God and Ourselves
3. 1.5.1-4, 6-15 God Revealed in Creation

Helm, Paul. *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), chapters 1, 8 and 9.

———. 'John Calvin, the Sensus Divinitatis, and the Noetic Effects of Sin', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 43, no. 2 (1 April 1998), 87–107.

Week 3 Book I: Self attestation of Scripture and accommodation

4. 1.6-7; 1.8.1, 13; 1.9 The Bible and the Holy Spirit

Helm, Paul. *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), chapter 7.

Week 4 Book I and II: Trinity, Christ as *autotheos* and the Calvinistic extra.

5. 1:12; 1.13.2-3, 6-7, 16-20 Idolatry and the Trinity
6. 2.13.1, 4; 2.14.1-4 The Person of Jesus Christ

Helm, Paul. *John Calvin's Ideas* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), chapters 2 and 3.

Week 5 Book II: Covenant and the relationship between Old and New Testaments

7. 2.6.1, 4; 2.7.1-8, 10-15 The Place of the Law
8. 2.9.1-4; 2.10.1-5; 2.11.1, 4, 7, 9-11 Relation between the Old and New Testaments

Lillback, Peter A. *The Binding of God: Calvin's Role in the Development of Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001). [Chapters 1 – state of play in scholarship with respect to whether Calvin was a 'covenant theologian'; 6 – meaning of 'covenant': binding of God; 7 – continuity and discontinuity: complex diagram; 8 – unconditional from God's perspective; but conditional from human-historical perspective]

Week 6 Book III: Providence and Predestination

9. 1.16; 1.17.1-11 God's Sovereign Providence
10. 3.21.1-3, 7; 3.22.1-3, 7, 11; 3.23.1-3, 5, 7-8 Election and Reprobation
11. 3.24.4-8, 15-17 Predestination

Week 7 Book III: Christian freedom

12. 3.19.1-5, 7-15 The True Nature of Christian Freedom

Week 8 Book IV: The Lord's Supper

13. 4.17.1-5, 8-11, 16, 19, 21, 24, 26, 31-33 The Lord's Supper

What is the *use* of Systematic Theology? A suggestion from Calvin's Prefatory Address.

1. Introduction and Prefatory Address

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (London: SCM, 1961).

Lane, Anthony. *A Reader's Guide to Calvin's Institutes* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

Introduction - a divided house?

Is there an 'iron curtain' between biblical studies and systematic theology

What is 'systematic theology'?

'the application of God's Word by persons to all areas of life.'¹

'What does the whole Bible teach us about a given topic?''²

Sola Scriptura – a solid foundation to systematic theology?

Some (wrong) approaches:

- a Bible-only approach, which claims that *only* the Bible is used in theology
- systematic theology is the result of reading the Bible, the end product of a chain
- systematic theology is an optional extra somewhat distant from the Bible
- the best biblical theology is done without the shackles of systematic theology

These approaches view the systematic theology as:

'Our understanding of God naturally arises from His Word, and so there is a natural progression from Exegesis to Biblical Theology to Systematics to Spiritual Theology... You might even look at the relationships b/w [between] each of these areas as a pyramid building on each other.'

Systematic theology, biblical exegesis and preaching are all related, and all are important:

Exegesis and dogmatics [systematic theology] without preaching are dry and academic; there is no application. Exegesis and preaching with no dogmatics are subjective and contentless; a passage of Scripture will be interpreted without regard for its proper context in the Word of God as a whole. Finally, dogmatics and preaching without exegesis are mere propaganda; they are not based on a proper assimilation of the facts.³

The reverse methodology

Moreover, it has been my purpose in this labor to prepare and instruct candidates in sacred theology for the reading of the divine Word, in order that they may be able both to have easy access to it and to advance in it without stumbling. For I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts, and have arranged it in such an order, that if anyone rightly grasps it, it will not be difficult for him to determine what he ought especially to seek in Scripture, and to what end he ought to relate its contents. If after this road has been paved, I shall publish any interpretations of Scripture, I shall always condense them, because I shall have no need to undertake long doctrinal discussions, and to digress into commonplaces. In this way the godly reader will be spared great annoyance and boredom, provided he approach Scripture armed

¹ John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 1987), 76.

² Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith* (Nashville, Tenn: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), xxv.

³ Bray, *Biblical Interpretation*, 204.

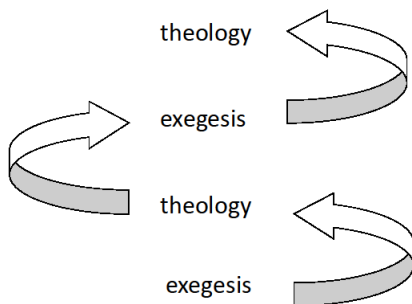
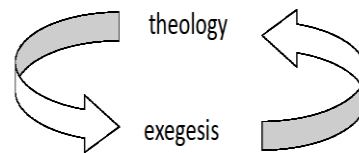
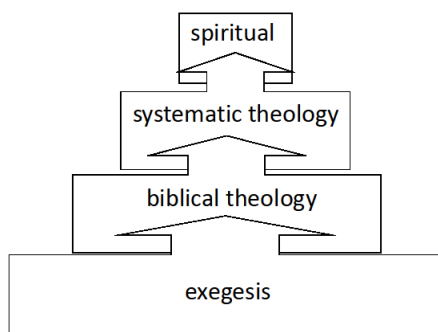
with a knowledge of the present work, as a necessary tool.⁴

Three points derived from this:

- (i) *Chronologically, Calvin did systematic theology before daring to write his commentaries*
- (ii) *'Commentaries should possess clarity and brevity'*
- (iii) *'godly reader ... approach Scripture armed with ... a necessary tool'*

“What effects should biblical texts produce on theology? What does it mean for theologians to read, understand, interpret, and apply the Scriptures?” We believe this is a good question... [but it does] not grapple with a related question of at least equal if not more importance: What effects should theology produce on biblical interpretation?⁵

Two-way traffic or going round in circles?



⁴ John Calvin, (tr) Ford Lewis Battles, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 'John Calvin to the Reader' in John McNeill (ed.), Ford Battles (tr.), *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1960), 4-5.

⁵ Max Turner and Joel B. Green 'New Testament Commentary and Systematic Theology: Strangers of Friends?' in Joel B. Green and Max Turner (eds), *Between Two Horizons* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1.