

# CALVIN VS WESLEY

BRINGING BELIEF IN LINE WITH PRACTICE

D O N T H O R S E N

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## Chapter 5

# SALVATION: MORE UNLIMITED THAN LIMITED

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. (John 3:16)*

When I was a teen, I sometimes felt intimidated by dramatic conversion stories that I heard, seemingly told on a regular basis in my Christian youth group at church. The stories usually came from popular books or movies about people who had been saved from lives of drunkenness, illegal drug use, wanton sexuality, and so on. The stories had various effects on me. On the one hand, they were sensational and caught my attention. On the other hand, the stories made me feel as if I had missed out on something—either I had missed the opportunity to experience a profligate life, or I had missed out on the opportunity to have a dramatic conversion testimony. These responses may seem silly to a reader of this book, but for a kid who had been raised in a relatively sheltered church by sheltered parents in a sheltered hometown, I felt spiritually gyped.

As I grew older and began to study Christianity more in depth, I felt better about the fact that dramatic conversion experiences probably have little to do with God blessing one person more than another. The particularities of how people experience conversion most likely have more to do with people's personality, religious background, and sociocultural context than they have to do with the quantity or quality of grace people receive from God. Since the nineteenth century, scholars such as William James have investigated people's conversion experiences and analyzed them, for example, in his book entitled *The Varieties*

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*of Religious Experience.* James concluded that the particularities of conversion or any religious experience probably have more to do with the particularities of our humanness than with inequitable spiritual relations with God.

John Wesley had a dramatic religious experience on May 24, 1738—his so-called Aldersgate experience. In his journal, Wesley described it the following way:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.<sup>1</sup>

What happened to Wesley that day? Lamentably, the subject has been a matter of ongoing debate: Was Wesley converted? Did he receive assurance of salvation? Was Wesley entirely sanctified? Was it merely one of many religious experiences that Christians might have throughout their lives?

Some debate also surrounds the conversion of John Calvin. In 1533, he had a religious experience that he described in more than one way. In his *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, Calvin said:

God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. Having thus received some taste and knowledge of true godliness, I was immediately inflamed with so intense a desire to make progress therein, that although I did not altogether leave off other studies, yet I pursued them with less ardour.<sup>2</sup>

Here conversion is described as a sudden change of "mind," which produced an inflamed "desire" to live a godly life. Elsewhere Calvin described his conversion more as an emotional and arduous process that resulted in supplication for deliverance from divine judgment. According to Bruce Gordon, Calvin said:

Being exceedingly alarmed at the misery into which I had fallen, and much more at that which threatened me in view of eternal death, I, duty bound, made it my first business to betake myself to your way, condemning my past life, not without groans and tears. And now, O Lord, what remains to a wretch like me, but instead of defence, earnestly to supplicate you not to judge that fearful abandonment of your Word according to its deserts, from which in your wondrous goodness you have at last delivered me.<sup>3</sup>

The religious experiences of Wesley and Calvin reveal how difficult it is to talk about salvation in a singular, definitive way. Yet, Christians testify in

ways that communicate biblical teaching as well as resonate with their own experience. Although salvation represents a core teaching of both Wesley and Calvin, they understood its occurrence in notably different ways. In order to recognize those differences, we need to learn about their understanding of God's gracious provision for people's salvation, starting with the Christian doctrine of atonement.

## Atonement

Both Wesley and Calvin believed that salvation occurs entirely by the grace of God. People do not earn or merit it; instead, salvation is a gift of God. How did God provide for salvation? It occurred through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who became incarnate and was the Messiah (Hebrew, *mashiah*, "anointed one," or Greek, *Christos*). He atoned for the sins of humanity, and through him God redeemed people and reestablishes relationship with them. The doctrine of the atonement (Old English, *at-one-ment*) summarizes Christian beliefs about how God provided salvation through Jesus and continues to save people through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

In church history, several views of the atonement arose. Calvin affirmed the historic doctrine of the substitutionary atonement. From this perspective, Jesus died as a substitute in place of humanity, who—on account of sin—deserved judgment and death. Calvin said: "This is our acquittal: the guilt that held us liable for punishment has been transferred to the head of the Son of God [Isa. 53:12]. We must, above all, remember this substitution, lest we tremble and remain anxious throughout life—as if God's righteous vengeance, which the Son of God has taken upon himself, still hung over us."<sup>4</sup> People receive the benefits of the atonement by grace through faith. Because Calvin emphasized the penal (or legal, forensic) aspect of Jesus' objective work of salvation on behalf of people, it is sometimes known as the "penal substitutionary view of the atonement."

Wesley largely agreed with the substitutionary view of the atonement. In talking about the atonement of Jesus, Wesley said, "His sufferings were the penal effects of our sins. 'The chastisement of our peace.'"<sup>5</sup> The point that Wesley and Calvin disagreed on had to do with the universality of Jesus' atonement, or at least the universal availability of it to people. According to Wesley, Jesus atoned "for all the sins of the whole world," not just for the elect.<sup>6</sup> People must still receive the benefits of the atonement by grace through faith. Not everyone responds in faith; some resist God's grace.

At this point, Wesley and Calvin disagreed. Although Calvin argued that

Jesus Christ atoned for it. This suggests that salvation is not just for one, but just for

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Consider Calvin said that "God invites all men to salvation, not else than an endowment; yet, Calvin's words: 'For Christ elect alone are the elect.' Thus, despite Calvin's atonement, only the world—finally

Wesley argued that in any way limitation for humanity the belief that all "Free Grace," Wesley. However, the atonement on prevenient grace themselves to receive salvation to people

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Jesus Christ atoned for the sin of everyone, only the elect will ever benefit from it. This suggests that Jesus may not have died as a substitute for everyone, but just for the elect. Calvin said:

As Scripture, then, clearly shows, we say that God once established by his eternal and unchangeable plan those whom he long before determined once for all to receive into salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, he would devote to destruction. We assert that, with respect to the elect, this plan was founded upon his freely given mercy, without regard to human worth; but by his just and irreprehensible but incomprehensible judgment he has barred the door of life to those whom he has given over to damnation. Now among the elect we regard the call as a testimony of election. Then we hold justification another sign of its manifestation, until they come into the glory in which the fulfillment of that election lies. But as the Lord seals his elect by call and justification, so, by shutting off the reprobate from knowledge of his name or from the sanctification of his Spirit, he, as it were, reveals by these marks what sort of judgment awaits them.<sup>7</sup>

The prospect that Jesus died only for the elect is known as the "doctrine of limited atonement." Calvin did not use the phrase, but many of his followers considered it the logical implication of Calvin's theology. The doctrine of limited atonement continues to be debated among his followers. This is in part because of how Calvin should be interpreted.

Consider Calvin's commentary on John 3:16. On the one hand, Calvin said that "God shows himself to be reconciled to the whole world, when he invites all men without exception to the faith of Christ, which is nothing else than an entrance into life."<sup>8</sup> These words suggest an unlimited atonement; yet, Calvin followed the aforementioned quotation with the following words: "For Christ is made known and held out to the view of all, but the elect alone are they whose eyes God opens, that they may seek him by faith."<sup>9</sup> Thus, despite Calvin's apparent claims to the universality of Jesus Christ's atonement, only those who are elect—determined before the foundation of the world—finally benefit from it.

Wesley ardently disagreed with the implication that Jesus' atonement was in any way limited. However, in affirming the universal availability of redemption for humanity, Wesley was accused by Calvinists of universalism—that is, the belief that all people will ultimately be saved. For example, in his sermon "Free Grace," Wesley appended a hymn entitled "Universal Redemption."<sup>10</sup> However, the accusation of universalism misunderstands Wesley's emphasis on prevenient grace and how God graciously enables people to decide for themselves to receive salvation or to reject it. Although God universally offers salvation to people, only those who believe and repent will receive the gift of

Jesus' atonement. Those who do not believe and repent in response to the gospel will not be saved; nor will they receive eternal life in heaven.

Because Calvinists rejected the possibility of anyone thwarting the will of God, the efficacy of Jesus Christ dying for everyone seemed illogical, since not everyone would be saved. Thus, they appealed to the doctrine of limited atonement to explain their belief that only the elect—those predestined by God for salvation—would receive the benefit of eternal life. Although Calvin may not have explicitly affirmed limited atonement, it was a logical implication of his system of beliefs, which his followers recognized and promoted, even if it seemed to limit Jesus' atoning work.<sup>11</sup>

## Order of Salvation

Sometimes Christians describe the atonement as the "objective" work of God for salvation—that is, the tangible, historical guarantee of people's redemption. In response to God's work, the "subjective" work of salvation has to do with how people appropriate or experience that salvation in life. In the introduction to this chapter, I talked about the debate that surrounded the religious experiences of both Wesley and Calvin. I categorize their experiences as part of the "subjective" dimension of salvation; so it is no wonder that subjectivity and diversity characterize our understanding of how salvation may occur, or even feel, in people's experience.

In addition to the subjective dimension of salvation, debate arose in church history with regard to the *ordo salutis* (Latin, "order of salvation"). Until the time of the Reformation, not much theological effort had been given to identifying a particular order of how people are saved. For the most part, the Roman Catholic understanding of salvation ordinarily follows a sacramental view of salvation. Although Roman Catholics believe in seven sacraments, five of them have to do with salvation. Sacramentally speaking, salvation begins with the sacrament of (1) baptism, which is followed by the sacrament of (2) confirmation, at which time people affirm the Christian faith into which they have been baptized. Having reached the age of reason (or age of accountability), confirmed Christians may then partake in the sacrament of the (3) Eucharist, grow spiritually through the sacrament of (4) reconciliation, and be graciously aided in dire times by the sacrament of the (5) anointing of the sick and dying. For all practical purposes, these five sacraments ordinarily serve as the order of salvation.

After the Reformation, it became increasingly important to Protestants to identify and distinguish themselves from Roman Catholic beliefs and practices as well as to distinguish themselves from one another. However, the

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determination to create a stated order of salvation did not formally arise until the eighteenth century, and was begun by German Lutherans, who lived long after the time of Calvin and who were geographically as well as theologically distant from Wesley. Neither Wesley nor Calvin focused on determining a formal order of salvation. To be sure, there was an implied order of salvation in the writings of both men. For example, Wesley published a sermon entitled “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” but it had more to do with advocating salvation by faith than with delineating a sequence of salvific events. In consequence, it is not appropriate to project an order of salvation upon them, even though numerous followers of Wesley and Calvin have attempted to do so.

Some approaches to determining an order of salvation are more descriptive than prescriptive. That is, they attempt to describe ordinary progressions that seem to occur in people’s experience of salvation, rather than describe an invariable, dogmatic ordering. Such descriptive attempts may be helpful to people in trying to understand their salvation, spiritual growth, and how others might be saved. However, some approaches to stating an order of salvation are prescriptive. Although prescriptive approaches may sound appealing because their adherents seem certain and passionate in their promotion of a particular order of salvation, they may also be too narrow (or wide, imprecise, etc.) in their understanding and thus detrimental to those for whom ordinary life and orders of salvation do not readily apply. Not even the Bible seems to provide a normative order of salvation, since first-century people converted in different times and places, with seemingly different experiences of God’s grace.

Certainly, some dimensions of salvation regularly seem to occur in the Bible as well as in Christians’ understanding of salvation: grace, faith, repentance, justification, sanctification, and glorification. But other theological concepts arise that not all Christians use (or use the same way): foreknowledge, predestination, election, calling, illumination, conversion, regeneration, adoption, assurance, mystical union, perseverance, mortification, entire sanctification, and so on.

If readers are new to these terms, then take heart. The array of terms related to salvation in particular (and to theology in general) can be daunting, especially for those untutored in Christian theology. Part of me wants to give brief definitions for all of the aforementioned terms. Yet, readers must be aware that there is not necessarily consensus for how each term is defined or theologically nuanced. For example, predestination may be qualified as particular or general, and grace may be qualified as effectual or prevenient. As helpful as an order of salvation might be (and charts that illustrate orders of salvation), such orderings may be as problematic in practice (Christian life) as they are in theory (theology). Thus expectations should be tempered in

how prescriptively orders of salvation are utilized theologically in discussing people's lives.

Rather than talk about formal orders of salvation in describing the theology of Wesley and Calvin, I will talk about them in more general, proximate ways. Historically, I want to avoid projecting upon Wesley and Calvin orders that do not indisputably appear in their writings. Theologically, it is still possible—and important—to talk about general orders or trajectories of salvation that observably appear in their writings, even though particularities of their respective understandings remain a matter of debate among their followers. Be that as it may, sufficient clarity in their orders of salvation is available for contrasting the different ways that Wesley and Calvin understood and promoted salvation.

### Calvin's View of Salvation

Because of Calvin's strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, salvation is—from start to finish—the work of God. When he talked about divine grace, Calvin emphasized the effectual (or irresistible) nature of God's election of those who will receive eternal life, and the reprobation of those who will receive eternal damnation. Again, he considered the predestination of people to be a great boon to them. By themselves, they have no hope whatsoever for salvation. They are sinful through and through, and it is only by God's grace, election, and predestination that some may be saved. Christians, at least, should be comforted and encouraged knowing that faith comes entirely from God, and that they have no need to worry about a salvation for which they are not ultimately responsible.

As soon as I use terms like "the decrees of God" and "election," I feel somewhat stymied by the followers of Calvin, who debate over the precise order of salvation. For example, some talk about the logical order of God's election preceding divine permission for the fall of humanity (supralapsarianism), while others talk about the logical order of God's permission for the fall of humanity preceding God's election (infralapsarianism). For the sake of this book, I will not engage the in-house debates among Calvinists. Likewise, I will not engage the in-house debates among Wesleyans with regard to a precise or standard order of salvation. Because intramural debates occur among both Calvinists and Wesleyans, I choose to speak of their orders of salvation more broadly than narrowly.

For example, union with Jesus Christ was a prominent theme in Calvin's view of salvation, but its precise place in the order of salvation has varied among his followers, if it has appeared at all. To Calvin, union with Christ

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involves an "indwelling of Christ in our hearts—in short, that mystical union."<sup>12</sup> Although he mostly talked about union with Christ in the context of the sacraments, Calvin considered it to occur prior to people's justification and sanctification. Union with Christ makes possible the imputed righteousness people receive by means of Jesus' atonement. It guarantees the effectual calling of people to salvation, which also enables their regeneration, faith, and repentance.

### Justification by Grace through Faith

Without doubt, Calvin's view of justification represents the most prominent emphasis in his view of salvation. People are justified by grace through faith, which reflects the Reformation emphases upon *sola gratia* and *sola fide*. People are justified, and righteousness is imputed to them. With his juridical approach to theology, Calvin considered Paul's teachings on justification to be the best way to clarify how God redeems people. He said, "Therefore, we explain justification simply as the acceptance with which God receives us into his favor as righteous men. And we say that it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness."<sup>13</sup> Calvin continued:

Therefore, "to justify" means nothing else than to acquit of guilt him who was accused, as if his innocence were confirmed. Therefore, since God justifies us by the intercession of Christ, he absolves us not by the confirmation of our own innocence but by the imputation of righteousness, so that we who are not righteous in ourselves may be reckoned as such in Christ.<sup>14</sup>

The imputation of Jesus' righteousness has to do with how God now views us "as if" we are righteous, since God accepts his righteousness in our stead. People who are elect may remain sinners, but they are forgiven on account of the atoning work of Jesus. Finally, it must always be remembered that people's justification occurs as a gift and never as a work. Calvin said, "The power of justifying, which faith possesses, does not lie in any worth of works. Our justification rests upon God's mercy alone and Christ's merit."<sup>15</sup>

Those who are justified enjoy additional works of God's grace in their lives. They experience sanctification and the spirit of adoption as children of God. Calvin said:

To prove the first point—that God justifies not only by pardoning but by regenerating—he asks whether God leaves as they were by nature those whom he justifies, changing none of their vices. This is exceedingly easy to answer: as Christ cannot be torn into parts, so these two which we perceive in him together and conjointly are inseparable—namely, righteousness and sanctification. Whomever, therefore, God receives into grace, on them he at

the same time bestows the spirit of adoption [Rom. 8:15], by whose power he remakes them to his own image.<sup>16</sup>

Calvin emphasized sanctification more than did Luther; that is, Calvin emphasized how God wants to nurture believers into greater spiritual maturity, greater Christlikeness. Both Calvin and Luther believed that sanctification as well as justification occurred by grace through faith. But Calvin argued that the Bible talks much about the Christian life and how believers ought to live in accordance with the third use of the law—the moral use—for their mortification and vivification, which were terms he used to describe sanctification. Of course, Calvin's view of sanctification differed from that of Wesley, which is why the next chapter is devoted to its discussion under the topic of spirituality.

Calvin believed that those who are chosen by God—the elect—will persevere until the time of their final glorification. Like justification, the perseverance of Christians is a gift of God. Calvin said: "There is no other reason why some persevere to the end, while others fall at the beginning of the course. For perseverance itself is indeed also a gift of God, which he does not bestow on all indiscriminately, but imparts to whom he pleases."<sup>17</sup> Calvin continued, "Only his elect does he [i.e., God] account worthy of receiving the living root of faith so that they may endure to the end."<sup>18</sup> Augustine talked about the perseverance of the saints, as did Calvin's followers. Other phrases used to capture the surety of salvation have been popularly referred to as "eternal security" or "once saved, always saved." These terms are not found in Calvin, and caution should be used in attributing them to him. But they suggest the notion that if people have faith, then they likely have it because God endued faith in them, and they cannot resist God's election.

## Wesley's View of Salvation

Although Wesley and Calvin shared many similarities in their views of salvation, they differ with regard to the work of God's grace in the order of salvation. From Calvin's perspective, grace works effectually (or irresistibly). It is limited to those who are elect, namely those predestined for salvation. Indeed those who are reprobate—those predetermined for damnation—neither do nor can receive eternal life on account of God's will, which decrees (or determines) everyone's eternal state. In contrast to Calvin, Wesley argued for the universal or unlimited prevenient work of God's grace. That is, God initiates salvation in everyone by grace, and continues by enabling people to have the opportunity to decide for themselves whether to accept or reject God's gift of salvation.

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The fact that people universally receive prevenient grace verifies that God wants everyone to be saved. The fact that some are not saved is because they have freely rejected God; it is not a matter of a predetermined plan that God established before the foundation of the world. God may foreknow the future and predetermine in general the conditions of life, but God does not predetermine in particular people's salvation or damnation. The difference between Calvin's view of grace working effectually and Wesley's view of grace working preveniently cannot be overemphasized. It exemplifies other differences between Wesley and Calvin with regard to the order of salvation.

According to Wesley, prevenient grace makes possible the call of God for people to believe and repent—to convert to Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation. God foreknows those who will believe and repent, and predestines their election, based upon that which God knows throughout eternity. God foreknows, predestines, calls, convinces, justifies, and glorifies. This order does not encapsulate the whole of salvation, but it illustrates how God works in people for their justification—for how God redeems people from sin and judgment.

Let us consider a sermon in which Wesley agreed with Calvin's emphasis on salvation by grace through faith. The very first sermon listed in his collection of sermons was entitled "Salvation by Faith." In it, Wesley said:

If then sinful man find favour with God, it is "grace upon grace!" . . . If God vouchsafe still to pour fresh blessings upon us—yea, the greatest of all blessings, salvation—what can we say to these things but "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" And thus it is. Herein "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died" to save us. "By grace," then, "are ye saved through faith." Grace is the source, faith the condition, of salvation.<sup>19</sup>

The issue that Wesley and Calvin disagreed on had to do with whether faith represented a condition or result of salvation—of God's gracious work in people for their redemption. From Calvin's perspective, faith represented evidence of God's effectual grace; whereas from Wesley's perspective, faith represented evidence of God's prevenient grace. Wesley thought that the Bible maintains faith as a condition of salvation, which God foreknows. In fact, he argued that Calvin and his followers emphasized God's absolute predestination so much that they jeopardized the biblical doctrine of salvation by faith. If election is unconditional and if atonement is limited, then people's faith becomes irrelevant, since God decreed who is saved and who is damned before anyone was even born. Wesley said, "[T]hose who maintain absolute predestination, who hold decrees that have no condition at all, cannot be

consistent with themselves, unless they deny salvation by faith, as well as salvation by works."<sup>20</sup>

God's grace works preveniently to call people to salvation, to convince them of the need to repent, and then to justify them. But for Wesley, justification was not the entirety of salvation. On the contrary, it was the beginning of a dynamic opportunity for relationship with God and growth into Christlikeness. God's grace regenerates people as well as justifies them, which leads to both assurance (at least initial) and greater convincing of ongoing sin in their lives. Ordinarily, it is not until after the time of conversion that believers become aware of their need of further blessing from God, facilitated by God's sanctifying grace as performed by the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, Wesley was quite hopeful about the degree to which God's Spirit may bless people with regard to the perseverance and assurance of their salvation, and to their sanctification.

Both Calvin and Wesley emphasized sanctification, but Wesley is often distinguished for his view of it. In his sermon "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley talked about the nature of salvation, which "consists of two general parts, justification and sanctification."<sup>21</sup> For the most part, Wesley agreed with the Protestant reformers with regard to justification by faith. The point they disagreed on, with regard to salvation holistically understood, was the dynamic of how God wants to continue working graciously and preveniently in the lives of believers so that they cooperate with the Holy Spirit in their spiritual growth. This is why Wesley talked about entire sanctification, since he believed that the God of the universe, who has the power to heal and perform miracles, wants to accomplish amazing transformation in Christians. If God is thought to be perfect, then to what other goal would God lead Christians other than to greater perfection in Christlikeness, in love, and in ministry?

### Assurance of Salvation

One final point of difference between Wesley and Calvin with regard to their views of salvation has to do with the assurance of salvation. Calvin believed that, if people are saved, then they are certain of it. He said, "Briefly, he alone is truly a believer who, convinced by a firm conviction that God is a kindly and well-disposed Father toward him, promises himself all things on the basis of his generosity; who, relying upon the promises of divine benevolence toward him, lays hold on an undoubted expectation of salvation."<sup>22</sup> Calvin's confidence was based on his doctrine of predestination and on the objective work of Jesus Christ for our atonement. He did not think that one is justified

without being sure the Holy Spirit may be a misleading, at which time it comes about assurance."<sup>23</sup> Calvin, and though might encourage assurance relied more on atonement, as found

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without being sure of it. Our experience of faith, good works, and indeed the Holy Spirit may aid our sense of assurance, but they are secondary, at best, and misleading, at worst. With regard to good works, Calvin cautioned, "From this it comes about that his conscience feels more fear and consternation than assurance."<sup>23</sup> Calvin was not unsympathetic to those who doubted their salvation, and thought that people's good works and other religious experiences might encourage them. But people's assurance of salvation and their perseverance relied more upon their faith in the objective work (and promise) of the atonement, as found in the Bible, than upon any subjective experience of it.

The dynamic of living in an ever-transforming relationship with Jesus Christ was at the heart of Calvin's break with Luther over law and gospel. For Calvin, the third use of the law is the law's ongoing purpose for believers. He would not sanction using predestination (and election) as a pretext to justify inaction in the life of faith. Conversely, the knowledge of election is always a personal, eschatological matter; it is to encourage believers that their progression in living in Christ is a sign of being a child of God. But assurance of election is never a *fait accompli*, since one's election in Christ is always provisional until this mortal life is over.

Subsequent followers of Calvin thought that he had been too severe in his teachings about assurance of salvation, thinking he may have argued too strongly that no one could be certain of his or her salvation, since no subjective or personal evidence was reliable. Although one may have great hope in the biblical promises of salvation for those who believe, the Bible also talks about the benefits of life in the Spirit, which bring progressive hope in the believer with regard to the prospect of eternal life after temporal death. Later Calvinists were more upbeat about the assurance of salvation that people may experience, for example, as found in The Westminster Confession.<sup>24</sup> But Calvin did not think that assurance of salvation represented a kind of religious experience subsequent to conversion. Instead people should turn to the promises of God's salvation as found in the Bible, emphasizing the priority of faith in such promises, which represent the only sure evidence of eternal life.

Wesley believed strongly in the assurance of salvation. He talked about both direct and indirect witnesses to it. In addition to the promises of the Bible, Wesley appealed to the witness of the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:15-17. He said, "By 'the testimony of the Spirit' I mean an inward impression of the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."<sup>25</sup> This sense of assurance is a privilege or blessing that Christians may experience, though some remain ignorant of it. Wesley was not afraid to talk

about the experiential dimensions of Christianity. God's salvation permeates all of life. Certainly people need to be discerning, since experiences can be misleading, but the experience of salvation touches upon people's heart, soul, and strength as well as mind. As Christians grow in relationship with God, they become more attuned to the presence and blessings of God's Spirit.

Wesley lived during the Enlightenment era, and his emphases on religious experience were often met with accusations of enthusiasm—a pejorative term that applied to enthusiastic worship practices as well as theological suspicion. However, Wesley thought that assurance had to do with more than cognitive affirmation of the promises of the Bible, as encouraging as they may be. After all, people are saved by becoming personally reconciled with God, mediated by the Holy Spirit, and experience adoption as children of God. As such, progress proceeds from the “faith of a servant” of God to that of a child of God who receives benefits of assurance superior to those of lesser faith.<sup>26</sup> Wesley considered his doctrine of assurance to be one of the great teachings of Methodism. He considered it “one grand part of the testimony which God has given [the Methodists] to bear to all mankind.”<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the direct witness of the Holy Spirit, Wesley talked about indirect witnesses. They include a good conscience and the fruit of the Spirit. Such witnesses contribute to degrees of assurance, because not everyone experiences assurance of salvation at the time of conversion. Indeed people commonly experience questions and doubts, but the Holy Spirit works to assure them both directly and indirectly that they are indeed saved, children of God.

### Final Thoughts

Wesley and Calvin represent strong advocates of the Protestant emphasis upon salvation by grace through faith. It is a gift that Jesus Christ merited on behalf of humanity through his life, death, and resurrection. Through Jesus' atonement, salvation is made available as a substitution on behalf of we who are sinful.

Although Calvin did not claim that Jesus Christ's atonement was limited per se, it is certainly true that Calvin believed that God effectually saves only some people. They are saved because God unconditionally elects (determines or predetermines) those who receive eternal life; God also reprobates those who will receive eternal damnation. Calvin considered God's sovereign control over the eternal states of people to be a great comfort, since no one by himself or herself can earn or merit salvation. However, Wesley considered Calvin's views to be mistaken. Instead, Wesley argued that Jesus clearly died on behalf of everyone; the atonement was not limited. Not all people will be saved; those who

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## *SALVATION: MORE UNLIMITED THAN LIMITED*

freely choose to reject God's offer of salvation will be judged for their sins. Yet, those who believe—by the grace of God—will be saved, since faith represents the condition for eternal life. According to Wesley, salvation involves a restored relationship with God, and God intends that people choose to be reconciled.

### Discussion Questions

1. What is your understanding of the atonement of Jesus Christ? In what way did his life, death, and resurrection provide for our salvation?
2. What do you think about the concept of an order of salvation? In what ways may an order of salvation be helpful, and in what ways may it be unhelpful?
3. Why was Calvin so encouraged to believe that salvation occurred by the sovereignty of God's gracious initiation alone? What is the danger of believing that people may somehow earn or merit eternal life?
4. What are the benefits of Wesley's belief that Jesus Christ's atonement was unlimited? What does it mean when Christians say that all may be saved?
5. In what sense do you believe that people are saved by faith? To what degree is faith credited to God, or to what degree is faith credited to people's choices?
6. What does assurance of salvation mean to you? To what degree may people—in this life—experience it? What does either Wesley or Calvin say that encourages you?

the elect. Calvin said: "But as a persuasion of God's fatherly love is not deeply rooted in the reprobate, so do they not perfectly reciprocate his love as sons, but behave like hirelings. For that Spirit of love was given to Christ alone on the condition that he instill it in his members. And surely that saying of Paul's is confined to the elect."<sup>18</sup> In this life, baptism represents a "token of mortification," symbolizing how God works both to mortify and vivify new believers: "And, just as the twig draws substance and nourishment from the root to which it is grafted, so those who receive baptism with right faith truly feel the effective working of Christ's death in the mortification of their flesh, together with the working of his resurrection in the vivification of the Spirit [Rom. 6:8]."<sup>19</sup> Even with regard to infants, infant baptism symbolizes "the mortification of their corrupt and defiled nature, a mortification that they would afterward practice in mature years."<sup>20</sup>

People are saved by grace through faith; it is a gift and not the result of work. Likewise, if it is God's will for believers to grow spiritually and become more mature, sanctified people, then God will bring the increase. However, people are to recognize humbly that spiritual matters are because of God and not because of them. They are to praise God, and give glory and thanks to God, for both their justification and sanctification. If God brings increase, then it is because of God and not because of anything that people think, say, or do. Their mortification is both a gift from God and a task that believers are to perform, but not with the expectation that they have contributed anything toward the spiritual increase—to their vivification. Since vivification as well as sanctification in general is the work of God, the only work that believers are to be concerned with is their mortification. Although mortification may be difficult to accomplish in life, it has more to do with faithful obedience to God than it has to do with any expectation of contributing to believers' sanctification. But the self-denial of mortification does help to order life here and now in the midst of so much sinfulness and moral depravity, and it helps suppress discomfiting circumstances in life and bring about greater orderliness.

### Holiness and the Christian Life

Wesley had a different understanding of the Christian life and of the sanctification to which God calls believers. He was far more hopeful, more expectant, with regard to the ways in which Christians may pursue "means of grace," which God established in the Bible, and by which they may grow spiritually. Always by God's grace, believers may pursue the holiness to which God calls them, knowing that they may "plant" and "water" with spiritual disciplines and that God gives the "increase" (1 Corinthians 3:5-9). After all,

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## SPIRITUALITY: MORE HOLINESS THAN MORTIFICATION

throughout the Bible, God calls people to be holy. By grace, God imputes holiness through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but God also commands believers to be holy as God is holy. 1 Peter 1:13-16 says:

Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who call you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy" [quoting Leviticus 11:44-45; cf. 19:2, 20:7].

What is holiness but love? In particular, holiness has to do with love for God and neighbor. When asked about the greatest command, Jesus responded with a twofold charge:

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31)

This charge was not given as an unachievable goal, according to Wesley, but an achievable objective, by the grace of God, through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. If God is a God of miracles, after all, then Christians need not look forward to a life of futile spiritual struggle but hopefully to spiritual successes. Although Wesley did not believe that people achieved absolute perfection in this life, they may consistently partner with God's grace in becoming more loving; more holy; more like Jesus. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to empower Christians and to impart righteousness to those who consecrate their lives to the lordship of Jesus.

In justification, God imputes righteousness because of the atoning work of Jesus Christ; in sanctification, God imparts righteousness because of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. (Initial sanctification occurs with people's regeneration.) Just as God conditions the imputation of righteousness by the decisiveness of people's faith, God conditions the impartation of righteousness by the decisiveness of people's faith, both enabled by God's prevenient grace. Wesley referred to this progression in salvation as including convincing, justifying, and sanctifying grace.

Wesley understood the problems involved with affirming any type of Christian perfection in this life. However, from his perspective, the commands of Jesus Christ were clear. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said:

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Of course, in discussion about becoming perfect, Wesley spoke both about obedience to Jesus' teachings and about perfection in love. Perfection in love, after all, represents the pinnacle of holiness, of Christlikeness. To be sure, it is far easier to disregard Matthew 5:48, consider it a goal (or ideal) that inspires but is unreachable, or project its applicability into the far future—but certainly not for life here and now. Yet Wesley believed that, in some biblical sense, God wants to disciple people into greater Christlikeness, which means growth toward perfection of holy love, rather than toward mediocrity or futility—spiritually, morally, and in relations with others.

Despite what some people might think, Wesley was realistic about the Christian life. For example, he talked about ways in which people would not become perfect. They would not become like God, or even Adam, as Wesley understood the goodness in which people were created. He said, "There is no such perfection in this life, as implies . . . a freedom from ignorance, mistake, temptation, connected with flesh and blood."<sup>21</sup> Despite challenges that occur in conceiving of the Christian life too optimistically, Wesley thought that there were greater challenges that occur in conceiving of the Christian life too pessimistically, too resignedly, and too passively. In his opinion, Calvin placed too little emphasis on the gracious outcome that may occur through people's faithful obedience to the laws of God and God's divinely appointed means of grace.

Although Calvin emphasized the need for obedience, it did not occur with the hope of God using such obedience to add in believers' spiritual formation. Without that hope, Wesley thought that believers might become complacent or despair about sanctification, the prospect of spiritual formation, and obedience to the laws of God. Complacency about the law may result in antinomian disregard for the laws of God. And Wesley feared that Calvinism tempted people with antinomianism, since so little importance was placed upon people's responsibility for pursuing Christlikeness. Moreover, without hope of growth in grace, Christians may lose heart about empowerment for holy living, available to them through the Holy Spirit, subsequent to justification.

From Wesley's perspective, there should be no "half a Christian"—that is, one who receives justification by faith but fails to go on toward sanctification by faith.<sup>22</sup> In other places, Wesley contrasted the faith of a "servant of God" from that of a "child of God."<sup>23</sup> The faith of a servant results in justification; the faith of a child—a son or daughter of God—results in justification, assurance of salvation, and sanctification that increases as both God and believers partner through the means of grace.

Indeed Wesley believed that God's gracious work through the Holy Spirit, life would be of one nature and no Pollyanna because he could not be evil, and Satan's perfection.

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Indeed Wesley was hopeful—even optimistic—about the ways in which God graciously works in the lives of believers, exhorting them to partner with the Holy Spirit in becoming more holy; more Christlike; more loving. To be sure, life would still be filled with questions, problems, and even catastrophes of one nature or another—inside a person as well as outside them. Wesley had no Pollyanna approach to the Christian life. But he was steadfastly hopeful because he considered the grace of God to be superior to the power of sin, evil, and Satan. So much so was this the case that Wesley talked about Christian perfection, or what he also called "entire sanctification."

### Entire Sanctification

Wesley wrote a book entitled *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* in order to assert (and reassert) the importance of his belief in entire sanctification, also known as "Christian perfection," throughout his entire ministerial career. In the book, he described entire sanctification the following way:

[Entire sanctification] is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies the being cleansed from sin, "from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;" and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so "renewed in the image of our mind," as to be "perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."<sup>24</sup>

At the time of conversion, people experience regeneration as well as justification, and regeneration begins the initial sanctification of believers. As God works sanctifying grace, believers have the privilege of benefiting from greater assurance, greater sensitivity to sin, repentance after justification, and desire to be holy—to love God and their neighbors—as Jesus Christ modeled Christian living. The Apostle Paul speaks of this trajectory of spiritual formation in 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this."

One way of thinking about entire sanctification can be illustrated by how Christians refer to Jesus as their Savior and Lord. It is common phraseology; people say: "Jesus is my Savior and Lord!" From Wesley's point of view, people become Christians when they accept Jesus as their Savior. This may occur instantaneously or gradually, in childhood or adulthood; most people's Christian testimony varies, depending upon the particularities of their upbringing, social and religious context, temperament, and so on. But in the life of most Christians, Wesley argued, it is not until sometime subsequent to

their conversion that they come to understand that Jesus does not just want to become their Savior but also Lord of their lives.

Of course, Jesus Christ is always Lord, but believers have not always consecrated their lives to his lordship. Jesus' lordship requires a qualitatively different relationship with God, one that is wholly submitted to God in obedience and open to the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Although people may become entirely sanctified at the time of their conversion, Wesley argued that most do not reach that stage of spiritual maturity, humility, and submission until a later time in their Christian lives. When they reach that "second crisis," as Wesley sometimes called it, and wholly consecrate their lives to God, then God's sanctifying grace works more effectively. Through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, Christians may experience a quantum leap—so to speak—in their sanctification, when Jesus becomes the Lord of all aspects of their lives and not just their Savior.

To be sure, Wesley was quite hopeful in describing what Christians may expect with regard to holy living once they are entirely sanctified. An example of Wesley's spiritual sanguinity can be found in the introduction to a second volume of hymns, which he quoted in *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. I will include only a sample—but still a lengthy sample—of the pastoral verve in Wesley's exhortations for Christians to live holy lives. However, note that Wesley qualifies many of his claims in footnotes, remarking that his past pastoral exhortations needed some proviso, lest people interpret him as promoting a completed perfectionism that he rejected. (In the quotation below, I put the comments from his footnotes in parenthetical brackets.) In description of entirely sanctified Christians, Wesley said:

They are freed from self-will, as desiring nothing but the holy and perfect will of God; not supplies in want, not ease in pain, [This is far too strong. Our Lord himself desired ease in pain. He asked for it, only with resignation: "Not as I will," I desire, "but as thou wilt."] nor life, or death, or any creature; but continually crying in their inmost soul, "Father, thy will be done." They are freed from evil thoughts, so that they cannot enter into them, no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in, they looked up, and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this, in a soul which is full of God. They are free from wanderings in prayer. Whosoever they pour out their hearts in a more immediate manner before God, they have no thought of anything past [This is far too strong. See the sermon "On Wandering Thoughts."] or absent, or to come, but of God alone. In times past, they had wandering thoughts darted in, which yet fled away like smoke; but now that smoke does not rise at all. They have no fear or doubt, either as to their state in general,

or as to any particular time.]. The "uncertainty" they shall do, and always.]; nor the times they have been freed from temptation yet they trouble and that grievousness are steadfast and understanding." For they "are sealed with the witness in themselves which the Lord has given from sin; many

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## SPIRITUALITY: MORE HOLINESS THAN MORTIFICATION

or as to any particular action [Frequently this is the case; but only for a time.]. The "unction from the Holy One" teacheth them every hour what they shall do, and what they shall speak [For a time it may be so; but not always.]; nor therefore have they any need to reason concerning it [Sometimes they have no need; at other times they have.]. They are in one sense freed from temptations; for though numberless temptations fly about them, yet they trouble them not [Sometimes they do not; at other times they do, and that grievously.]. At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are steadfast and unmovable. Their peace, flowing as a river, "passeth all understanding," and they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." For they "are sealed by the Spirit unto the day of redemption," having the witness in themselves, that "there is laid up for" them a "crown of righteousness which the Lord will give" them "in that day" [Not all who are saved from sin; many of them have not attained it yet.].<sup>25</sup>

Wesley's comments above reveal why he is often misinterpreted as advocating a perfectionism that seems impossible biblically as well as experientially. In trying to describe the dynamics of spiritual formation, Wesley tried to hold in tension both his hope and realism with regard to the Christian life. On the one hand, he did not think that Christians should feel defeated about their spiritual prospects. By divine grace, God provides believers with the empowerment to grow spiritually through the means of grace so that they may love God as well as their neighbors, consistently overcoming the trials and temptations experienced in life.

On the other hand, Wesley did not think that Christians were exempt from ongoing challenges spiritually, physically, and socially. While on earth, Christians still experience temptation, sin, evil, pain, and suffering. But they do not need to suffer continuous struggle and defeat; divine help is available. God is present, aiding people through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, as well as the Bible and the means of grace, to overcome challenges they face. Reflecting upon entire sanctification unquestionably includes theological elements of mystery, as do other theological affirmations. But Wesley believed that God is sufficient to help people live with great hope in overcoming sin and other problems in life, not only for life hereafter, but also here and now.

Was Wesley spiritually unrealistic; overly hopeful? Of course, one can accuse Wesley of anything. Besides, the problems that people experience in life cannot always be easily understood, much less mastered. In fact, there may occur trials and tribulations in life that cannot be mastered, short of a miracle. Be that as it may, Wesley was compelled to make sense, at least, of biblical commands to be perfect, to be holy, to love, and to become more like Jesus Christ. The Bible is full of exhortations to mature, despite the reality of physical,

emotional, and social limitations as well as spiritual limitations. Christians need to take those biblical exhortations seriously, according to Wesley, and not consider themselves passive, powerless nonparticipants in the Christian life. Moreover, church history is replete with Christians, from the time of the patristics—both west and east, but especially in the East—who considered holy living a possibility, rather than a principled, albeit inaccessible, goal. That tradition of holy living was carried on in Western Christianity through various saints, mystics, and advocates of spiritual disciplines, such as the Catholic Thomas á Kempis and the Anglican William Law, who both influenced Wesley.

Although Calvin may have advocated obedience through mortification, it was not with the hope of contributing to more victorious Christian living. If growth and maturity occurred, then thanks be to God. But we had nothing directly to contribute to it. By contrast, Wesley said that we can contribute to our spiritual formation, and that we can help to overcome sin, evil, pain, and suffering—all enabled by God's grace. We will never cease facing challenges in our lives, but we are not without means of grace, described in the Bible, by which we may partner with God in overcoming trials, growing spiritually as Christians, and transforming others societally as well as individually.

In describing entire sanctification, Wesley said that Christians will continue to grow. They will never cease learning, maturing, loving, and becoming more like Jesus Christ. Such growth actually increases after entire sanctification, since believers become more sensitive to ongoing sin in their lives and are quicker to try to overcome it by God's grace. The effects of sanctification will affect others socially as well as individually, physically as well as spiritually, and with justice as well as love. Spiritual growth may occur through gradual progress, punctuated by various crisis experiences. But no crisis is as consequential for one's sanctification as the decision—which began, continued, and will be completed by God's grace—to consecrate one's life wholly to Jesus as Lord as well as Savior.

## Final Thoughts

Both Wesley and Calvin emphasized sanctification in the lives of Christians. Calvin talked about both the mortification and vivification that occurs in believers. God vivifies people through both justification and sanctification. God continues to work in the lives of believers by mortifying them, lest they forget that they are saved by grace through faith and that they are wholly reliant upon God for all aspects of their salvation. They should mortify their lives as well, since God graciously provided laws in the Bible that help them live more moral and orderly lives.

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## *SPIRITUALITY: MORE HOLINESS THAN MORTIFICATION*

Wesley also emphasized sanctification, but thought that Christians had far greater reason to hope with regard to the lives to which God calls them here and now. Subsequent to conversion, God's Holy Spirit continues to work in and through the lives of believers. In fact, God provides means of grace in the Bible coupled with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to help people partner with God in becoming more spiritual; more holy; more loving; more like Jesus Christ. God wants people to engage actively in spiritual disciplines that contribute to their growth, their victory over trials and temptations—always by God's grace. Indeed, Wesley was very hopeful about how Christians may become entirely sanctified. Greater Christlikeness in their lives occurs, not for their sake alone, but for the sake of loving God, and for loving their neighbors in ways that benefit them physically, ethically, and socially as well as spiritually.

### Discussion Questions

1. How do you envision the Christian life? Would you argue that, in reality, people ought not to expect too much with regard to overcoming struggles they may experience? Or would you argue that God's grace helps people overcome struggles, rather than being defeated by them?
2. To what extent do Christians need to mortify their lives? What are the benefits of the self-denial of mortification? To what extent should Christians expect that God vivify their lives, enlivening them spiritually?
3. How much responsibility do you believe God gives you in partnering with the Holy Spirit in partaking of various means of grace (or spiritual disciplines)?
4. What means of grace do you find most helpful in growing spiritually? Prayer? Bible study? The Lord's Supper? Fasting? Christian conference?
5. To what degree do you think that God wants you to become more perfect? More holy? More loving? Is entire sanctification (also known as Christian perfection) a helpful teaching? What are its liabilities?
6. What are ways that you would like to grow more spiritually? What are ways that you believe may help you to grow?

# NOTES TO PAGES 48-62

5. Wesley, "Working Out Our Own Salvation," II.1, sermon 85, *Works* (Jackson), 6.509.
6. Ibid., III.7, *Works* (Jackson), 6.513.
7. Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xvi.9 (1.208-9).
8. Wesley, "Predestination Calmly Considered," §41, *Works* (Jackson), 10.226-27.
9. Ibid., §42, *Works* (Jackson), 10.227.
10. Calvin, *Institutes*, II.ii.17 (1.276).
11. Ibid., II.ii.17 (1.276).
12. Ibid., II.ii.17 (1.276-77). Cf. *Institutes* IV.xx.15-16 (2.1503-05).
13. Wesley, "Working Out Our Own Salvation," II.1, sermon 85, *Works* (Jackson), 6.509.
14. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.iv.1 (2.1012). Words in brackets are mine. In footnote 2, the editor, John McNeill, provides the full quotation from Cyprian: "You cannot have God for your Father unless you have the church for your Mother."
15. Ibid., IV.iv.5 (2.1017).
16. Ibid., IV.xiv.6 (2.1281).
17. Ibid.
18. Calvin offers several arguments in defense of infant baptism. See Ibid., IV.16.1-32 (2.1303-23).
19. Wesley, "The Means of Grace," II.1, sermon 16, *Works*, 1.381.
20. Wesley, "Minutes of Several Conversations," Q.48, *Works* (Jackson), 8.322-23.
21. Ibid., 8.323-24.

## Chapter 5. Salvation: More Unlimited Than Limited

1. Wesley, *Journal* (Curnock ed.), 1:475-76.
2. Calvin, "Preface," *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol. 1, trans. James Anderson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), xl-xli.
3. Calvin, quoted by Bruce Gordon, *Calvin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 34.
4. Calvin, *Institutes*, II.xvii.5 (1.509-10).
5. Wesley, "The Doctrine of Original Sin," pt. V, *Works* (Jackson), 9:412.
6. Wesley, *NT Notes*, 1 John 2:2.
7. Calvin, *Institutes*, III.xxi.7 (2.931).
8. Calvin, *Commentaries*, John 3:16. Cf. Calvin's comments upon 1 John 2:1-2, which suggests unlimited atonement.
9. Ibid.
10. Wesley, "Free Grace," §30, *Works*, 3.559-63.
11. For more information about the doctrine of limited atonement, see the appendix.



# NOTES TO PAGES 65-80

12. Calvin, *Institutes*, III.xi.10 (1.737).
13. Ibid., III.xi.2 (1.727).
14. Ibid., III.xi.3 (1.728).
15. Ibid., III.xviii.8 (1.830).
16. Ibid., III.xi.6 (1.723).
17. Ibid., II.v.3 (1.320).
18. Ibid., III.ii.11 (1.556). Words in brackets are mine.
19. Wesley, "Salvation by Faith," §3, sermon 1, *Works*, 1.118.
20. Wesley, "Thoughts on Salvation by Faith," §10, *Works* (Jackson), 11.495.
21. Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," I.3, sermon 43, *Works*, 2.157.
22. Calvin, *Institutes*, III.ii.16 (1.562).
23. Ibid., III.xiv.20 (1.787).
24. See The Westminster Confession of Faith, 1647, chap. 18, "Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation," in *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition*, vol. II, part 4, *Creeds and Confessions of the Reformation Era*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Valerie Hotchkiss (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 627-28.
25. Wesley, "The Witness of the Spirit, II," II.2, sermon 11, *Works*, 1.287.
26. See Wesley, "On Faith," I.10-13, *Works* (Jackson), 7.198-200.
27. Wesley, "The Witness of the Spirit, II," I.4, sermon 11, *Works*, 1.285.

## Chapter 6. Spirituality: More Holiness Than Mortification

1. Calvin, *Institutes*, II.viii.51 (1.415).
2. Ibid., III.iii.3 (1.595).
3. Ibid., III.xx.46 (2.913).
4. Ibid., III.xx.2, 10 (2.851, 862).
5. Ibid., III.xx.27 (2.886).
6. Ibid., III.xx.3 (2.852).
7. Ibid., II.vii.29 (1.396).
8. Ibid., III.iii.11 (1.603).
9. Ibid., II.viii.1 (1.713).
10. Ibid., II.vii.52 (1.416).
11. Ibid., III.xviii.1 (1.822).
12. Ibid., III.xx.52 (2.919).
13. Ibid., III.xx.46 (2.913).
14. Ibid., IV.xv.12 (2.1313).
15. Ibid., III.iii.10 (1.602).
16. Ibid., III.iii.14 (1.606).
17. Ibid., III.iii.20 (1.615).
18. Ibid., III.ii.12 (1.557).
19. Ibid., IV.xv.5 (2.1307).

20. Ibid., IV.xvi.20 (2.1343).
21. Wesley "Preface," §1, *Hymns and Sacred Poems, Works* (Jackson), 14.328.
22. Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection: As Believed and Taught by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley from the Year 1725 to the Year 1777* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1966), 11.
23. Wesley, "On Faith," I.10-13, *Works* (Jackson), 7.198-200.
24. Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection: As Believed and Taught by the Reverend Mr. John Wesley from the Year 1725 to the Year 1777* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1966), 12. Words in brackets are mine.
25. Wesley, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," §13, *Works* (Jackson), 11.379-80.

### Chapter 7. Church: More Catholic Than Magisterial

1. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV (2.1011).
2. Ibid., IV.i.9 (2.1023).
3. Ibid., IV.i.4 (2.1016).
4. Ibid., "John Calvin to the Reader" (1.4).
5. Ibid., IV.i.5 (2.1017).
6. Ibid., IV.i.5 (2.1018).
7. Ibid., IV.iii.11 (1052).
8. Ibid., IV.vii.20 (2.1139).
9. Ibid., IV.ii-xi (2.1041-229).
10. For example, see the editorial comments by Beveridge and Bonnet about the letter Calvin wrote to William Farel regarding the joint ecclesial and civil execution of Michael Servetus. See letter, "To Farel," CCCXXXI, *Works*, 5.436, n. 2: "The error of Calvin in the death of Servetus was, we may say, altogether that of his age, inasmuch as men of the most conciliating and moderate dispositions, viz., Bucer, Ecolampadius, Melanchthon, and Bullinger, were at one in their approval of the condemnation of the unfortunate Spanish innovator. One may deeply deplore this error without insulting the Reformation, and combine in a just measure that pity which a great victim demands, with respect for those men whom an unhappy time made the accusers and the judges of Servetus."
11. See Calvin, "The Discipline of the Church: Its Chief Use in Censures and Excommunication," *Institutes*, IV.xii (2.1229-54).
12. See Calvin's letters to Simon Sulzer and Heinrich Bullinger arguing for the punishment of Michael Servetus, which contributed to the execution of Servetus. See Calvin, letter "To Sulzer," CCCXXVII, *Works*, 5:427-30; and letter "To Bullinger," CCCXXXVI, *Works*, 5.447.
13. Calvin, *Institutes*, IV.iv, vii, x (2.1489-90, 1492-93, 1497-99).
14. Ibid., IV.xii.1 (2.1229-30).