

The Southern **PRESBYTERIAN** *Journal*

VOL. XVII NO. 20

SEPTEMBER 17, 1958

\$3.00 A YEAR

Do We Need Revival?

Do we need a revival in America today?

Do we need a revival in our Church?

There are indications that a revival is desperately needed and some of these are as follows:

- Lack of love between Christians.
- Worldliness in the Church.
- Powerless Christians and a powerless Church.
- A lack of concern for the lost.
- Ignorance of God's Word.
- Prayerlessness.
- Overemphasis on organization.
- Low standards of morality.

By these and many, many other things it is evident that we in America need a revival. To that end we should pray and to that end we should bend every effort.

"O Lord, send a revival . . . and let it begin in me."

Calvin's Tolerance and Intolerance

By Rev. Wm. C. Robinson, D.D.

This is one of the messages delivered at Weaverville, N. C., on August 20, 1958, on the program of the Conference on Reformed Theological Thought, sponsored by The Southern Presbyterian Journal. Other addresses delivered on the same date will be printed in future issues of the Journal.—Editors.

For years, some have seen Calvin only in the affair of Servetus and have stigmatized him as the epitome of intolerance. More recently, his words about crossing ten seas to secure a united Protestant front have singled him out as the sixteenth century ecumenist. Accordingly, some are picturing him as the acme of tolerance, ready for any organizational merger regardless of doctrinal differences. Which of these is the true picture of John Calvin? Or is either? Or neither?

Fundamental Position

Fundamentally, Calvin sought tolerance where it was a matter of detail and of human differences. He was intolerant where it seemed to him that the truth of God was at stake. He urged tolerance of different evangelical modes of worship, he sought accommodation with the several Protestant views of the Lord's Supper, he magnified other Reformers and their writings even though these differed in detail from his own positions. On the other hand, he was intolerant of what he regarded as error in the presentation of the truth of God whether that came from papal additions to the Word, Libertine misuse of the doctrine of the Spirit, or rationalistic denials of the Trinity. He stood for the revealed truth of God and the life in accord therewith, and in the difficult tensions of history went further in advocating punishment for heresy than his own principles or earlier statements warranted.

Calvin's Tolerance

One of the best examples of Calvin's tolerance is found in his attitude toward the people of Geneva who had expelled Farel and himself as their pastors. Some Farel partisans insisted that the Church which remained had deteriorated and was no longer to be attended. When this word came to Calvin he was anything but pleased. In reply, he denounced the separatist tendencies. As long as the fundamental teachings of the Gospel were to be heard in the sanctuaries, the Church was there and "a departure from the church is a renunciation of God and Christ," *Institutes*, IV.1.10. "For so highly does the Lord esteem the communion of His church, that He considers every one as a traitor and apostate from religion, who perversely withdraws from the Christian society which preserves the true ministry of the word and sacraments," *Ibid.* God has ordained that

the inestimable treasure of the Gospel be communicated to us from earthen vessels, each of whom is enveloped in some cloud of ignorance and many of whom are in error in non-essential points. A Christian communion is not to be rejected even though it be charged with many faults, but one must forgive mistakes in those things of which persons may be ignorant. "I would not be understood to plead for any errors . . . but we ought not, on account of every trivial difference of sentiment, to abandon the church which contains the saving and pure doctrine that insures the preservation of piety, and supports the use of the sacraments instituted by our Lord," IV.1.12. "The pious conscience is not wounded by the unworthiness of other individuals, whether he be pastor or private person," *Ibid.*, par 18, 19.

Moreover, when the Reformed Church of Geneva in its weakened state was attacked by Cardinal Sadoletto and the city invited back into its former allegiance to the Pope, John Calvin, the exile, was big enough to take up his pen and answer for the Church which had expelled him. Though he was at the moment relieved of the charge of the Church in Geneva, Calvin still embraced it with paternal affection since "God, when He gave it me in charge, bound me to be faithful forever." In a dignified and gentlemanly fashion Calvin answered the Cardinal, concluding his masterful presentation:

"May the Lord grant, Sadoletto, that you and your party may at length, perceive that the only true bond of Church unity is Christ the Lord, who has reconciled us to God the Father, and will gather us out of our present dispersion into the fellowship of His body, and so, through His own Word and Spirit, we may grow together into one heart and soul."

This magnanimous action of Calvin so endeared him to Geneva that he was recalled. On his return, he pursued a wise and conciliatory course, making no complaint against his expulsion and demanding no punishment of those who had done it.

"I value the public peace and concord so highly, that I lay restraint upon myself . . . On my arrival it was in my power to have disconcerted our enemies most triumphantly, entering with full sail among

the whole of that tribe who had done the mischief. I have abstained. If I had liked, I could daily, not merely with impunity, but with the approval of very many, have used sharp reproof. I forbear; even with the most scrupulous care do I avoid anything of the kind, lest even by some slight word I should appear to persecute any individual, much less all of them at once. May the Lord confirm me in this disposition of mind."¹

One of the most beautiful examples of Calvin's personal tolerance is seen in his treatment of Melanchthon's *Loci Communes*. This is the one work of the Reformation period that can dispute with Calvin's *Institutes* the preeminence, as the Protestant textbook of systematic theology. Here was a great opportunity for professional jealousy. Calvin rose above it. Further there had developed a divergence between the later editions of Melanchthon's work and Calvin on the place of the human will in salvation. The difference was recognized and discussed by the two men in friendly letters. Yet Calvin published the new edition of the *Loci Communes* in French in 1546 with a highly commendatory introduction by himself. He describes the book as a summary of all things necessary for a Christian to know on the way of salvation, expressed in the simplest manner by its learned author. He recognizes their differences on the subject of free will and says that Melanchthon seems to concede to man some share in his salvation, yet in such a manner that God's grace is not in any way diminished and no ground is left to us for boasting. Henry remarks:

"So free were these rare men of ambition, love of glory, and littleness of spirit; that they thought of nothing but the salvation of the world. Calvin wanted France to love Melanchthon as much as he did, and to be converted to Christ through him."²

Another example of Calvin's tolerance comes out in his dealing with the Marian exiles in Frankfort, 1554-1555. There the British Protestants worshipped in the same Church used by French exiles so that the simpler services of the Huguenots attracted the attention of their English-speaking co-religionists. The latter were using the Second Prayer Book adopted under Edward VI. John Knox led a group in demanding that this be simplified, but Edmund Grindal and Richard Cox insisted on continuing the substance of the Prayer Book. Controversy waxed warm between the Knoxians and the Coxians. Calvin confessed "many tolerable ineptitudes" in the prayer book but advised that ceremonies were only in the fourth place after the Word, the sacraments and discipline. Accordingly, he urged that there be no division over this matter.

In treating Calvin's view of ceremonies one must keep in mind that the Second Book of Edward VI was essentially a Protestant worship. Earlier Calvin had expressed to Melanchthon his disapproval of chanting in Latin, of pictures and candles in churches, of exorcism in baptism and other Roman rites that had not been purged from the Lutheran worship. And when Melanchthon was moved to compromise with the Leipsiz *Interim* which accepted Roman ritual Calvin protested both in private letter and in his tract to Charles V. In the former, he stated:

"You extend the distinction of non-essential too far. You are aware that the Papists have corrupted the worship of God in a thousand ways. Several of these things which you consider indifferent are obviously repugnant to the Word of God. . . . We consider our ink too precious if we hesitate to bear testimony in writing to those things which so many of the flock are daily sealing with their blood. . . . I had rather die with you a hundred times than see you survive the doctrines surrendered by you."

In the appeal to Charles V against the Interims, he describes these as the German Adultery and declares that even a dog will give his life to maintain the honor of his master. Ought not the believer to give his that the truth of God may stand?

Dr. John T. McNeil, *Calvinism*, 1954, labors the point that in his relations with these British Reformers Calvin did not object to their episcopacy. The meat in this statement is that Calvin put first things first. By the influence and support of such Continental Reformers as Calvin, Bucer, Bullinger and John a Lasco, the Marian Exiles were able to bring the Church of England into the Reformed family. It was no easy task, and all that they sought was not accomplished. But despite the high church proclivities of the masterful Queen, Grindal, Cox, Jewell, Sandys and their associates were used of God to reform the Church of England. Grindal incurred the wrath of the Queen as he stood manfully for the use of prophecyings in order to train a ministry of the Word for the churches of England. Elizabeth put him under house arrest, but prophecyings and Protestant reformation went on in the churches of old England.

In answer to an invitation from Archbishop Cranmer March 20, 1552, asking for a meeting with Melanchthon, Bullinger and others in Lambeth Place to draw up a consensus creed for the Reformed Churches, Calvin replied:

"I wish, indeed, it could be brought about that men of learning and authority from the different churches should meet somewhere,

and after thoroughly discussing the different articles of faith, should by a unanimous decision, deliver down to posterity some certain rule of doctrine. . . .

As to myself, if I should be thought of any use, I would not, if need be, object to cross ten seas for such a purpose. If the assisting of England were alone concerned, that would be motive enough for me. Much more, therefore, am I of opinion, that I ought to grudge no labor or trouble, seeing that the object in view is an agreement among the learned, to be drawn up by the weight of their authority according to Scripture, in order to unite churches seated far apart."

Here is Calvin's ecumenicity. He reckons the marked divisions between the different churches as among the chief evils of the age. He seeks to heal these divisions and thinks no effort too laborious to that end. But the ground on which he seeks to secure it is not at all indifference as to doctrine. Rather it is "some certain rule of doctrine" drawn "according to Scripture." What would be included in these doctrines? In view of the current doctoral study by an Episcopal rector, it is evident that the substitutionary atonement is the key to Calvin's theology, P. van Buren, CHRIST IN OUR PLACE. In the light of Professor T. F. Torrance's KINGDOM AND CHURCH it is pre-eminently true of Calvin that the reign of Christ is the great end for which the Church exists. Whatever other elements Calvin might or might not insist upon, we are convinced that he would not advocate a Church merger which sits lightly upon the atonement or one that substitutes majority rule for the reign of Jesus Christ, the sole King and the only Law-giver in Zion. According to the *Institutes* IV,1.12 the necessary doctrines are such as these: that there is one God, that Christ is God and the Son of God, that our salvation depends on the mercy of God.

Finally, Calvin was tolerant of the variations of Protestant views on the Lord's Supper. This was the divisions issue within the Reformation family and here Calvin labored hardest to understand and to reconcile. He stood between Luther and Zwingli, being closer to the former in insisting on the objective presence of Christ in the whole service of the Lord's Supper and closer to the latter in his exegesis of the clause, *Hoc est corpus Meum*. Indeed, in seeking peace and harmony here Calvin did some of his best theological work. For one thing he related the sacrament to the great acts of God according to the analogy of the faith. God, the eternal Son, took our human nature and thereafter gave us of His Holy Spirit to bring us into union with Himself. In this sacrament, He truly feeds us by His Spirit and His Word

sealed with the sign of a supper. He conveys to us the bountiful grace of God received from the fount of Deity and supplied to us from the reservoir of His glorified humanity. Our first duty in the matter is not scientific definition but the obedience of faith. That is, we are to come to Christ and feed upon him, to draw from this fountain and from no other source until all our proper needs be truly satisfied. Our first responsibility is to accept His word that He is the bread of life by feeding upon Him. In so doing, there is greater blessing for the heart than the head can understand, and more that the mind can understand than the pen or mouth can express. Thus did Calvin come to the true notion of faith in distinction from scientific exposition or demonstration. Here Calvin is being followed by significant scholars today and will be followed by many in the days that are to come.

If you will allow a personal word, I first cast anchor in Calvin when I went to the *Institutes* for a more adequate treatment of the Lord's Supper. Now, a third of a century later, I am convinced that this approach was Providential and that the full sweep of Calvin's doctrine of the Supper as a matter of faith and of the analogy of faith is yet to bear fruit in the Protestant world. The first thing we are to do, at the Table of the Lord, is to feed upon Christ Who here presents Himself to us as the bread of life.

The Intolerance of Calvin

On the other hand, Calvin was intolerant when the truth of God was at stake. For him, the things of God come before those of man even as they have priority in the ten commandments, in the Lord's Prayer, in the angel chorus at Bethlehem and in the Apostles' Creed. In the *Institutes*, III.xix.13, Calvin writes:

"So charity ought to be subservient to the purity of faith. It becomes us, indeed, to have regard to charity; but we must not offend God for the love of our neighbor."

This intolerance showed itself in Calvin's break with the Roman Catholic Church. Always a high churchman, it was a difficult wrench to separate from the Church of his devout mother. But when he could find no peace from the fear of eternal hell in the ceremonies and teachings of the Roman Church, God suddenly subdued Calvin's heart to the obedience of His own Word. In the reply to Sadoleto, Calvin admits, "I had from a boy professed the Christian faith, and I had been taught that I was redeemed by the death of Thy Son from the liability to eternal death, but the redemption I thought of was one whose virtue would never reach me." For, according to the papal teaching, God's clemency towards men is confined to those who show themselves deserving of it by their good works, by making satisfactions for their sins, and by seeking the intercession of the saints.

The Cardinal insisted that everything introduced into the worship and life of the Church had the approval of the Holy Spirit, Calvin held that only those things which are grounded in the Word of God are of the Spirit. He placed fidelity to Christ and the purity of the Gospel over against the commandments of men. In reply to the Theses of the Faculty of Paris, he said that the Church is the wife of Christ only so long as she follows His Word. When she recedes from this truth she ceases to be a spouse and becomes an adulteress, *Tracts*, I.26-27, 103. To Sadoleto, he writes:

"Now Cardinal, if you bear to receive a truer definition of the Church than your own, say, in future, that it is the society of all saints, spread over the whole world, and existing in all ages, yet bound together by the one doctrine and the one Spirit of Christ, which cultivates and observes unity of faith and brotherly concord," *Tracts*, i.37.

Calvin holds as an indisputable axiom that nothing ought to be admitted in the Church as the Word of God but what is contained in the law, the prophets or the apostolic writings, *Institutes* IV.viii.8. "God denies to any man the right to promulgate any new articles of faith, in order that He alone may be the master in spiritual doctrine," *ibid.*, par. 9. Thus it is mere pretense to assume that the Church has the right in its councils to make new articles of faith, *ibid.*, par. 10. Christ has exempted believers from necessary obligation to all human authorities in matters of conscience, III.xix.14.

Again Calvin was intolerant of wickedness even when that appeared in the person of a patriot, a supporter, or a community leader. Patriots who had thrown off the yoke of Rome and Savoy insisted on their right to enjoy their hard won liberties. The Libertines went further, teaching a community of goods and of women, Pierre Ameaux of an old patriot family represented the first group. In the second group, his wife was condemned for the theory and practice of "free-lovism" of the worst kind. Such Libertines rejected the Scripture as a dead letter or used allegorical interpretations to get from it their own fancies. Some carried their system to pantheism, others to atheism and blasphemous anti-Christianity.

Calvin was exiled from Geneva because he stood for the sanctity and independence of the Church in Geneva. In the very midst of the trial of Servetus the issue came up again in the action of the City Council freeing Philibert Berthelier from the excommunication decreed against him by the Church. In direct opposition to the Council, Calvin exclaimed in the words of Chrysostom:

"I will lay down my life ere these hands shall reach forth the sacred things of God to those who have been branded as His despisers."

Even Ami Perrin was moved and secretly directed Berthelier not to approach the communion table. The sacrament was celebrated "in profound silence, and under solemn awe, as if the Deity Himself had been visibly present among them."

What Calvin did for the sixteenth century was to make the unseen government and authority of God, to which all must bow, as visible to the intellectual eye of faith as the mechanism of the mediaeval Church had been to the eye of sense. Men as they gazed saw that they were in the immediate presence of the authority of God Himself, directly responsible to Him. In lieu of the Pope's House they were given a vision of the "house of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and summoned to bring their lives into conformity with the divine archetype.

Geneva came out of the crucible of Calvin's victory over the Libertines with a degree of moral and spiritual prosperity which distinguished her from any other city for several generations. "What a startling contrast she presents, for instance, to Rome, the city of the vicar of Christ and his cardinals, as described by Roman Catholic writers of the sixteenth century! If ever in this wicked world the ideal of Christian civil society can be realized in a civil community with a mixed population, it was in Geneva from the middle of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century."³ In 1556 John Knox found it the most perfect school of Christ that was ever in the earth since the days of the Apostles. Fifty years after Calvin's death, Valentine Andreae, a noted Lutheran Churchman, found in it still a purity of morals, of domestic life and of public discipline wanting in other communities and equal to that in his own father's home. Indeed, even Philip Jacob Spener found oil for his Pietist lamp in Geneva.

The Execution of Michael Servetus

Finally, Calvin was intolerant of heresy as the flames which took the life of Michael Servetus of Villeneuve on October 27th, 1553, eloquently attest. In considering this tragic episode it is very difficult to remain objective. Yet, Professor Emile Doumergue who offers the account most favorable to Calvin is also the disciple who initiated the erection of the Monument of Expiation at Champel on the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the event. Here the error of Calvin and of his times is condemned, and liberty of conscience affirmed as the true heritage of the Reformation.

Ere the first century of the Christian Roman Empire was complete, Theodosius the Great had enunciated imperial decrees against heresy and Maximus the usurper had executed Priscillianists at Treves. Following this, even Augus-

tine was driven by the extremes of the Donatists to favor the use of the sword to stay their disorders. Thus, persecution for heresy became a part of the thinking of Christendom.

As a youth of twenty the brilliant Servetus wrote an attack on the Church's doctrine entitled, *THE ERRORS OF THE TRINITY*. In this and in his later books, "there were few doctrines of the Reformers with which Servetus did not totally disagree."⁴ And "if his views were known, he would have been banished or burned in any land of Europe."⁵ As early as 1530, Oecolampadius of Basel condemned Servetus' belligerent temper and his Arian positions. Zwingli counselled any means that were possible to prevent "his horrible blasphemies" from breaking out to the prejudice of the Christian religion. Bullinger described him as Servetus or *perdetus*. Bucer of Strasbourg roundly condemned him. In 1532, Aleander Luther's opponent at Worms, wrote "These heretics of Germany, Lutheran or Zwinglian, ought to punish him, if they are so very Christian and evangelical and defenders of the faith as they boast, because he is as much opposed to their profession as to the Catholic."⁶

While hiding under an assumed name and another profession, Servetus turned to Calvin because he had no other place to turn. The Roman Catholic Inquisition was seeking him in Spain and in Toulouse and using even his brother in an effort to find him. Every other Protestant city had condemned or expelled him. He fancied that he could win Geneva to his *Restitution of Christianity*. Calvin rejected his advances, pointed out his errors, sent him a copy of his own *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and did not betray him to the Inquisition at the time of their correspondence (1546-47).

Indeed, Calvin began his public life as an advocate of tolerance. His initial book was a commentary on Seneca's *De Clementia*, and the first edition of the *Institutes* declares that,

"It is criminal to put heretics to death. To make an end of them by fire and sword is opposed to every principle of humanity."

The Letter to Francis I and Cop's Address urge tolerance for the oppressed Protestants and a reasonable consideration of their claims in the light of the Word.

Though in the abstract young Calvin favored tolerance in matters of conscience, in the hurdygurdy of hard history the Reformer found his evangelical brethren thrown in prison and put to the stake on the charge that they denied all the articles of the Christian religion. Earlier Peter Caroli had charged Farel and Calvin with Arianism. Tolerance of the heretical author of *De Trinitatis Erroribus* would lend weight to the charge. Moreover, the law read, "He

that blasphemeth the Name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death . . . as well the sojourner as the home born," Lev. 24.16. The Christian world of the sixteenth century regarded Servetus as a blasphemer of the Holy Trinity and of the living God. In his pantheism he held that when one stamped on the pavement, he stamped on God. He was asked if the Devil were not, then, also God and replied, "Who doubts it?"

Dr. Georgia Harkness holds that Calvin was not naturally cruel since he never put a Roman Catholic to death for his positions. The utmost penalty for the majority of those whose views differed was exile. Calvin did not favor burning for heresy, but he did favor capital punishment for blasphemy.

Five Protestant scholars from Berne were betrayed, tortured, tried and executed in Lyons in 1552-1553. Antoine Arneys, a Catholic in Lyons, wrote to his cousin Guillaume Trio in Geneva taunting him with living in a city devoid of ecclesiastical order and discipline. In other words the imprisonment and expected execution of the five scholars was justified on the ground of the alleged departure from the faith and order of Christendom on the part of the Protestants. De Trie wrote back from Geneva telling of the hidden heretic in Lyons serving as a medical doctor and yet putting out statements describing the blessed Trinity as a three-headed Cerberus and a monster of hell. With the letter went the first four leaves of the *Restitutio*. Of course, Servetus denied the charge and to save his Geneva friend from embarrassment and if possible ease the fate of the Protestant scholars Calvin furnished to de Trio the evidence that the anonymous physician was Michael Servetus. As a result he was arrested and condemned to be burned by the Roman Catholic Inquisition. Before the matter could be consummated, Servetus escaped and came to Geneva.

There he was detected and arrested. Even before coming he had some information and contacts with leading Libertines such as Ami Perrin and apparently thought that they would support him so that he could supplant Calvin and take over the leadership of Geneva. Calvin was not a judge in Geneva, not even a citizen. He had no civil position. But he did act as a kind of religious prosecuting attorney, trying to get Servetus to admit and recant his errors and also setting forth these errors on the Trinity, on his pantheism, and on other Christian doctrines. The Libertines were willing to use Servetus to unseat Calvin, but when they appealed to the other Protestant cities for advice the replies came back calling for his execution. In the end Calvin pleaded for a milder form of capital punishment, and the aged Farel came to Geneva to try to win the condemned man

to a penitent frame of mind. Who shall say he entirely failed in this last effort? Servetus died crying, "Jesus, thou Son of the eternal God, have mercy upon me."

On the occasion of the establishment of the assembly of the congregation at Sinai, three thousand were slain, Exodus 32.28. At the founding of the Church in Jerusalem, Ananias and Sapphira perished. This hunted heretic was burned to manifest to sixteenth century Europe that Protestantism was not anti-trinitarian pantheism but applied the law of Leviticus as Christendom had understood it for a thousand years.

Since this was one too many to burn for his erroneous convictions, therefore the disciple of Calvin stops at the monument of expiation at Champel and bows his head in shame for Calvin's mistake. But which one of us does

not also need to bow his head in penitence at a moment of expiation for his own errors in both the matters of tolerance and of intolerance? Thank God, He has given us a monument not only of expiation but also of propitiation at Calvary. As one bows there in confession for past failures and transgressions, may each acknowledge anew the lordship of Jesus, beseeching His more complete guidance that one may tread in a more acceptable manner the thorny path of tolerance and of intolerance—that the truth of the Gospel may remain intact among us, Gal. 2.6.

¹ Letter to Myconius of Basel, March 14, 1542.

² P. Henry, *The Life of John Calvin*, 1.376.

³ Schaff, P., *History of the Christian Church*, VII.515.

⁴ Hunter, A. M., *The Teaching of Calvin*, 1950, London, p. 242.

⁵ Bainton, R., *Hunted Heretic*, 1953, Boston, p. 104.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

Presbyterian Predestination

By G. AIKEN TAYLOR, Ph.D.

A heart-breaking article has just appeared in the PRESBYTERIAN OUTLOOK from the pen of Dr. Kenneth Foreman. It is an article leaving an ache in the heart because it so perfectly discloses, between its lines, the reasons for the unfortunate tension today tearing at the vitals of the strongest (even if not the largest) Presbyterian body in the world.

The author wrote an "open letter" to the Presbytery of Brazos, which this year sent up to the Assembly the ill-fated request that the paragraphs dealing with the "negative" aspects of the historic doctrine of Predestination be removed from the Confession of Faith. One fervently may wish that the issue had not been joined on the level represented by the department of theology of a seminary. Yet, on the other hand, a letter as "open" as this one cannot be rudely ignored. It casts the cards on the table in an open challenge, for all to see. Let us look at them.

The subject, of course, is the doctrine of Predestination. Following the universal, historic treatment of the theme as it is found in Scripture in Patristic and in Reformed writings, our Confession affirms that God's Sovereignty extends to all things. It becomes specific, declaring that if His dominion encompasses the fortunes and destinies of men, it must include the fate of all men, both bad and good. God cannot Call, with Sovereign authority, a portion of mankind, while leaving the rest to pursue their free and independent way in defiance of His Will. Either He is inflexibly Sovereign over *all* things, or He is inflexibly Sovereign over *none*.

No one would claim to understand the full implications of the thought of absolute Sovereignty. If some of the implications are pursued to their logical conclusions, the effect is disconcerting to the finite mind. We simply cannot explain how the finite and the Infinite can mix without clashing. And the greatest problem our minds face is not that an Infinite God determines all things, but rather that an Infinite God who determines all things has yet granted us some measure of independence without surrendering His Sovereignty.

Christians such as Luther, wrestling with the problem of foreordination and free will, have seen no solution but that one which affirms man's total lack of freedom. Calvin, however, stubbornly followed the Apostle Paul in his bold affirmation of both freedom and determination. With the Apostle he declared that God will have all men to be saved. With the Apostle he further declared that all things work for good to them that are called according to God's eternal purpose. And with the Apostle he regretfully but firmly concluded that there is both goodness and severity in our God who has mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will He hardeneth.

It is true, as critics of our Confession have said, that apparent contradictions exist in the Creed. But they also seem to appear in the Holy Scriptures. You cannot quote Timothy to prove that the doctrine of Reprobation cannot be, unless you also quote Romans that it can be. But there are no contradictions in the mind of God, however His ways look to us. We mortals surrender to unbelief when we argue that the ways of the Almighty