

I have here a book by Henry Preserved Smith, a man who had great destation for Christianity, but a great scholar who has studied very carefully into the facts and situation of those days. He tremendously disliked Calvin's teachings. He quotes one man who said: The God of Calvin is a hypocrite, a liar, perfidious, unjust and the abbetor and patron of crime and who works for the devil himself. Yet, in spite of this, Smith says, The men who were influenced by this awful teaching of Calvin bore themselves with I know not of what lofty seriousness and with a matchless distane of all earthly peril and of all earthly grandure. Believing themselves to be chosen vessles and elect instruments of grace, they could neither be seduced by carnal pleasures nor awed by human might. Taught that they were kings by the election of God and priests by the imposition of His hands, they despised the puny and vicious monarchs of this earth. They remained in fact what they always felt themselves to be an elite, the chosen few.

Renan, the French skeptic who did so much to injure Christianity nevertheless said in his history that Calvin's great influence was due to the fact that he was the most Christian man of his generation! Calvin's last nine years == the people of Geneva were utterly devoted to him. He established a situation there to which people came from all over Europe to train and then went back to spread the Gospel. Luther laid the foundation; Calvin built upon it. The subsequent centuries were utterly different from what they would have been without these two great Chrístian leaders.

Let us pray: O God our Father, we thank you for the work of M. Luther and the work of J. Calvin. We thank you for the way you used these man to establish sound Christian teaching and to lead many souls to the knowledge of salvation. We see in our day a tremendous need. None of us probably have the energy and the tremendous drive or abilities of Luther or Calvin. But you have given us each gifts and abilities to train ourselves to serve the Lord. We pray that you wuld enable each of us to the utmost of our ability to serve our Lord as faithfully as Luther and Calvin. In Our Saviour's Name. Amen.