

# Calvin's Preaching and Homiletic: Nine Engagements Part 1

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## Calvin's preaching

We often think of John Calvin as a theologian, but the centre of his life was his ministry to the people of Geneva and especially his preaching.<sup>1</sup>

Calvin wrote theology, but he also wrote commentaries, letters of pastoral encouragement, a catechism for children, and church ordinances and instructions for the supervision of country churches. Calvin was also a teacher and preacher, and this was his daily task in Geneva, as he preached on average five sermons a week, and lectured three or four times. He also reordered the life of the church, worked to reform the society, provided pastoral care for individuals, taught in the Academy, took part in the ministry of the gospel in Geneva with its three parishes and large ministry team, trained and nurtured others in ministry in Geneva and beyond, engaged in theological debate and discussion with his fellow reformers, and with the Roman Catholic church, and worked for the growth of Reformed Christianity in Europe, especially in his beloved homeland, France. Calvin was a man active in gospel ministry, and his preaching was a key ingredient in that ministry. We cannot understand Calvin without his preaching.

The task of regularly preaching the word brought him at last into the heart of the Reformation movement in its battle for the soul of Europe, for it was more through his preaching than through any other aspect of his work that he exercised the extraordinary influence everyone has acknowledged him to have had.<sup>2</sup>

Calvin helped create a powerful pattern of vernacular expository preaching, with a new homiletic, a new rhetoric, a new 'art of preaching'.<sup>3</sup> He influenced preaching in Europe by the people he trained in Geneva, especially those training for France, and by ministers who found refuge in Geneva and then returned home. Knowledge of his preaching spread through his published sermons, especially in French and English. English publications from 1574 to

1583 included sermons on Job, Galatians, Ephesians, the Ten Commandments, Timothy and Titus, and Deuteronomy.<sup>4</sup>

### The homiletic models available to Calvin

Here are the three main models of preaching available to Calvin

#### *i. The formal Medieval sermon*

Here is an outline of formal medieval Latin sermons.

**Theme:** The text from the Bible, including three significant words.

**Ante-theme:** Introduction and prayer for the sermon.

**Introduction:** A way into the theme, using Scripture, a theologian, a pagan writer, a proverb, or an illustration.

**Division:** This was always in three parts, each of which had to have rhyming endings, such as, in English, *creation*, *participation*, and *satisfaction*.

**Declaration:** Justification of the three-fold division of the theme.

**Confirmation:** Demonstration that the three-fold division was Scriptural.

**Development:** The Theme was supported by appeals to theologians, reasonable arguments, stories and illustrations, then the people urged to respond.<sup>5</sup>

Smyth comments, ‘The text from Scripture is supposed to be the preacher’s theme: it is in fact merely the peg on which he hangs an academic exercise.’<sup>6</sup> Calvin would have been familiar with this style of preaching. However it was too artificial, too clever and too distracting for ordinary people. No wonder that he did not use it in preaching in Geneva.<sup>7</sup>

#### *ii. The popular style of vernacular preaching*

Popular vernacular preaching was developed by the Preaching Orders. It was not always based on Scripture. It was typically the preaching used by mendicant preachers when preaching in the countryside, at Preaching Crosses. It was plain, easy to understand, it used simple vivid language, humour, satire, moral tales and illustrations, and it was moralistic rather than biblical or theological. Hugh Latimer’s sermons are effective examples of this kind of preaching, as for example his *Sermon on the Card* and *Sermon on the Plough*.<sup>8</sup> There are many references to biblical words and expressions, but the Bible is assumed, not taught. Calvin did attempt popular vernacular preaching, but transformed this style to teach people the content and meaning of the Bible.

### iii. *Expository preaching*

Calvin found examples of expository preaching in Augustine and John Chrysostom.<sup>9</sup> He prepared a preface for an edition of Chrysostom's sermons<sup>10</sup> to provide biblical teaching for lay people, and show expository preaching in the early church.<sup>11</sup>

Such expository preaching in the early Church died out for four reasons: the demands of theological controversy, the presence of many ignorant people required simpler sermons, more complex services meant that sermons had to be shorter, and low standards of clergy training meant that many were unable to preach biblical sermons.<sup>12</sup>

Expository preaching was also found in monasteries. *Homilia* was used for this verse-by-verse exposition of Scripture, and *Sermo* for more popular non-exegetical preaching.<sup>13</sup> There were vernacular Bible translations and sermons before the Reformation.<sup>14</sup> The Franciscans and Dominicans used some biblical exposition in vernacular preaching.<sup>15</sup> Wycliffe had used vernacular expository preaching.<sup>16</sup> Early humanists and Reformers Wimpfeling, Geiler and Surgant were pioneers of an expository style that became common in Zürich, Strasbourg, and Geneva.<sup>17</sup>

Another source could have been the late medieval innovation of teaching books of the Bible in universities.<sup>18</sup> Luther lectured for ten years at Wittenberg on Genesis, and Thomas Cranmer and other Reformers studied the Bible this way. Among Calvin's contemporaries, Zwingli was the first to preach through books of the Bible, and began his sermons on Matthew in Zürich in 1519.<sup>19</sup>

What had been done in Latin in monasteries and universities was now being done in the vernacular in churches. Calvin discarded the first two models, and adapted the third, using expository preaching in the vernacular as the almost universal diet for the ordinary people of the church.

### Nine demanding engagements

Calvin's preaching was marked by nine demanding engagements. Any one of them is demanding: it was the genius, strength and vitality of Calvin's preaching that he attempted all of them. Calvin helped his hearers engage with God, engage with the Bible, and engage in theology. He engaged his own

humanity in his preaching. Calvin engaged with his congregation in his preaching. He engaged in training the congregation and also future preachers. In these engagements he challenges our preaching today. We recover Calvin's homiletic not in order to reproduce it in our different contexts, but so that we can be stimulated by his engagements, understand his methodology in its historical and theological context, and benefit from his example.

### 1. Engage with God who is present and powerful

The preacher and the congregation must engage with God, because God is present and active in his majestic splendour and saving power and compassion in the Scriptures, in the congregation, in the preacher and in the sermon. Calvin does not preach as if God is absent: he preaches because God is present. '[God] has ordained his Word as instrument by which Jesus Christ, with all his benefits, is dispensed to us.' For 'the preaching of the gospel ... is the spiritual sceptre of Christ, by which he displays his power'.<sup>21</sup>

The present secret work of the Spirit is to change us, not to make the Scriptures powerful. By the Spirit's power inherent in God's words and by the same Spirit's secret internal work within us, God effects hearing, faith, obedience and transformation:

God works by his words that are preached to us. It is not a bare voice that sounds in the air and disappears. For God puts into his words the power of his Holy Spirit.<sup>22</sup>

In the Scriptures the living words of God are heard,<sup>23</sup> and because the Scriptures have flowed to us from the very mouth of God,<sup>24</sup> so preaching which expounds and applies the Scripture means that God's voice sounds in his church: 'God would even have his living voice to resound in his church ... [so] preaching is inseparably united with Scripture.'<sup>25</sup> It therefore follows that, 'as often as the Word of God is set before us ... God is present and calling us.'<sup>26</sup> So Calvin taught the congregation to hear God's voice through the preacher.

Therefore if a person claims to be a believer and a member of God's flock, and comes to hear a sermon either in a house or from a pulpit, should think like this: 'Our Lord wants me to hear this man as my father, and receive doctrine and counsel and warning at his hands'.<sup>27</sup>

God is present, and his words are an effective means of grace.

God calls out that morning and evening his arms are stretched out to receive us and call us from afar. He wants nothing more than to have us under his wings, and peaceably to enjoy us. So, for our part, we must take pains to run to him to hear him, and cut off all hindrances that would hinder us from hearing the preacher.<sup>28</sup>

He set aside time during the sermon to encourage people to feel the presence of God.

It is certain that if we come to church we shall not only hear a mortal man speaking, but we shall feel [even by his secret power] that God is speaking to our souls, that he is the teacher. He so touches us that the human voice enters into us and so profits us that we are refreshed and nourished by it.<sup>29</sup>

He helped them expect to meet with God. ‘Wherever the Gospel is preached, it is as if God himself came into the midst of us.’<sup>30</sup> ‘Where there is preaching, there God’s voice rings in our ears.’<sup>31</sup> ‘When we speak, behold God, who wishes to be heard in our persons.’<sup>32</sup>

Preachers are responsible:

Then let them work hard to ensure that their hearers feel the power that is in God’s word. That it may be received as it should and everyone may submit to it, so that God may be worshipped by all.<sup>33</sup>

What a contrast to the view that a sermon is merely a study of the Bible, that our focus is only on the Bible, and that the church is the people of God gathered around the word of God, and that our task is merely to teach the Bible. The Bible and preaching are means to an end: our purpose is that people meet God in Christ.

## **2. Engage with the sixty-six ‘texts’ of Scripture by expository preaching**

It is possible to help the congregation to engage with God, and yet to fail to engage in any significant way with Scripture. Calvin worked hard to help his congregation to engage with Scripture. He wanted the congregation to learn to understand the Bible, to meditate on the Bible, to receive God’s words in the Bible, to be moved and transformed by the Bible, to learn to interpret the Bible, to remember the Bible and to be able to explain and teach the Bible to others. This involved a commitment to the ‘texts’ of the Bible.

Calvin followed God's commitment to the words of the human authors of the Bible and helped his congregation to do the same.

He wanted to avoid 'taking a text,' in the sense of taking one or two verses of Scripture out of context, paying scant attention to their original purpose. In his letter to the Seigneur of Piedmont, he warned of the emptiness of those preachers who have only 'snatched in a passing way a few words of Holy Scripture.'<sup>34</sup> A text [that is, one or two verses] without a context is a pretext. It is, of course, a very idiosyncratic understanding of the word 'text' to use it to describe one or two verses of the Bible.

Calvin wrote of the commentator on Bible texts:

It is almost his only task to unfold the mind of the writer with whom he has undertaken to expound, he misses his mark, or at least strays outside his limits, by the extent to which he leads his readers away from the original meaning of his author.<sup>35</sup>

We have sixty-six 'texts' in our Bible, and we should treat each text with respect and integrity. Expository preaching attempts to do this.

During his ministry in Geneva from 1549-1564 he preached Sunday series on Hebrews, Acts, Psalms, Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and the Gospels. On weekdays he preached from Jeremiah, Lamentations, Micah, Zephaniah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Ezekiel, Job, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Genesis, Judges, and Samuel. This model of preaching was particularly helpful for people who did not know their Bibles, as it is the natural way to read and understand a text or book.<sup>36</sup>

Calvin wanted to convey God's words as clearly as he could, by preaching them in the shape in which they were found in the Bible. He explained when he began his sermons on Psalm 119:

For my own part, because I will frame myself to that manner and order which the Holy Ghost has here set down, I shall enforce myself to follow as briefly as I can the plain and true meaning of the text ... for performance thereof I determine by the grace of God to finish eight verses apart in every sermon, and to hold myself within such compass, so that the most ignorant shall easily acknowledge and confess that I mean nothing

else but to make open and plain the simple and pure substance of the text.

In basing his sermons on the *lectio continua* of the Bible, 'Calvin's purpose in preaching was to render transparent the text of Scripture itself.'<sup>38</sup>

The Reformation had to undo the untold damage caused by the decision made by leaders of the Roman Catholic Church that the Bible was too difficult for ordinary people, and was reserved for scholars; and that instead of the Bible, the ordinary people would have statues and paintings; 'the bibles of the uneducated'.<sup>39</sup> This policy produced generations of people who knew Bible images, but had no idea what they meant. Calvin and his colleagues ministered amidst Biblical illiteracy. Expository preaching was one of their remedies.

This was not his only style, as he preached sermons for Church festivals, especially Christmas, Passiontide and Easter, and Pentecost, and also special wedding sermons.<sup>40</sup>

Susan Schreiner claims that his 159 sermons on the Book of Job are an excellent example of expository preaching.<sup>41</sup> She comments that in his preaching of the whole book: 'Calvin had to respect the integrity of the complete text.'<sup>42</sup> Calvin's respect for the text reflected his respect for human authors and for God. He recognized the moral duty of the hearer and reader. In Kevin Vanhoozer's words: 'The Golden Rule, for hermeneutics and ethics alike, is to treat others—texts, persons, God—with love and respect.'<sup>43</sup>

Dawn DeVries comments on Calvin's preaching: 'He moves constantly from text to meaning, from words to doctrine, and from doctrine to the contemporary problems of being a Christian in Sixteenth century Geneva.'<sup>44</sup>

### 3. Engage with theology<sup>45</sup>

Reading biblical texts in context is a theological as well as not just a literary exercise. This is because the Bible is a book about God, and because God's mind lies behind the coherence of the collection of Bible texts. John Leith comments on Calvin's preaching:

The sermons are powerful precisely because Calvin explicated and applied the Scriptures word by word, verse by verse, within the framework of a vision of the Christian faith as a whole.<sup>46</sup>

Calvin's preaching gains strength from his theological engagement with the texts, his theological thinking more generally, and his theological critique of the church and world of his generation. His theological engagement not only helps him avoid a superficial treatment of the texts of Scripture, it also helps him to see the relevance of the texts for the people to whom he preaches.

When we think about his theology, it is worth distinguishing between Biblical Theology and Systematic Theology, as both are present, and both bring depth to his preaching.

Biblical Theology is the explanation of the theology which reflects the shape of the gradual unfolding of the biblical revelation throughout Old and New Testaments. It expresses the shape and extent and balance of the Bible, deals with its unity and diversity, and expresses its coherence. It is an account of the verbal revelation that accompanies Salvation History: for as Salvation History is an account of the saving works of God, Biblical Theology is an account of the saving words of God. Biblical Theology is the study of the God-given interpretation of Salvation History that is expressed in the Bible, its developing themes. While it is true that the formal study of Biblical Theology did not occur until the work of Gabler,<sup>47</sup> it is not possible to expound the Scriptures without some kind of Biblical Theology, implicit or explicit. Calvin did not write a Biblical Theology. Instead he expressed his Biblical Theology different ways in the *Institutes*, his Commentaries, and in his sermons. Calvin developed a strong and comprehensive Biblical Theology, which not only helped him interpret the Bible, but also helped him to preach and apply it.<sup>48</sup>

Systematic Theology is the exposition of the coherence of Christian thought, which expresses and develops biblical thought in topics, and also shows the coherent connections between those topics. It brings together what the Bible as a whole teaches on a topic, and show the balance, shape, coherence and implications of that teaching. It analyses what the Bible teaches, and puts that teaching in the light of the intellectual history of the church and of humanity.

Calvin's focus was on knowing God and so therefore knowing ourselves. As Parker has pointed out, an aspect of the coherence of all his writing and preaching was that he kept on answering the questions: 'Who is God?' 'What is God like?'<sup>49</sup> He thought and wrote as a theologian. In the words of

Steinmetz: 'The Institutes uncovered the architectonic structures of the Bible, the underlying plan of the whole, that placed the details in their proper context.'<sup>50</sup> Calvin does not refer to *The Institutes* in his sermons,<sup>51</sup> yet his work in thinking and writing that is represented in *The Institutes* was fundamental to the power, relevance, and application of his preaching of the Bible. For Calvin did not confuse academic presentation with intellectual clarity. He used his academic rigour to help achieve clarity of thought and presentation, but did not believe that intellectual clarity must always appear in academic garb. In fact, he wanted to use clarity of thought for the benefit of common people.

Calvin's engagement with Biblical and Systematic theology served his preaching well. His Biblical and Systematic theology helped to bring a unity of mind to his preaching,<sup>52</sup> and also helped him in his application of the Scriptures to his congregation.

#### 4. Engage his humanity in his preaching

Calvin's commitment to the power and glory of God did not blind him to the fact that God uses human beings in his service, and that he uses preachers to teach, edify, form and train his people.

There are two reasons why some preachers diminish the humanity of the preacher and of the congregation. They might want to emphasise the presence and power of God: yet Calvin knew that the present and powerful God delighted to use humans in his gospel service. They might want to restrict the effects of sinful humanity: but this is to diminish the power and grace of God, who is able to achieve his gospel purposes through sinful humans, and does so for his glory and their blessing. Calvin made neither mistake, because he knew that God's glory was not diminished by using humans, and his power not diminished by using sinful humans in his service.

God uses the humanity of each preacher, and that humanity determines in part the style of the preaching.

Preachers who are not self-aware will be blind to the ways in which their character and personality and interests may help or hinder their preaching, will be less able to adapt to serve the needs of the congregation, and will be less

useful in training other preachers, as they will naturally try to create them in their own image. If we need to know ourselves,<sup>53</sup> then the self-knowledge and self-awareness of the preacher will help in the effective communication of God's words to the congregation.

Here are some examples Calvin's particular humanity. He wrote: 'I am naturally fond of brevity,'<sup>54</sup> and Steinmetz comments: 'Calvin's "lucid brevity" is one of his principal contributions to the intellectual heritage of the Reformation.'<sup>55</sup> His sermons benefit from his brevity, because by speaking briefly on each verse, he did not lose the meaning of the texts by endless ornamentation, distractions, or amplification.

However Calvin also realized that brevity had its drawbacks, and that when people were hearing texts and ideas for the first time, they needed help to understand and absorb the words of the preacher. So, to complement his brevity, he added repetition, to help his congregation.<sup>56</sup> For in order to serve his people, Calvin was willing to change his natural style. As he wrote in his introduction to his Commentary on Romans: 'I have tried to modify my style.'<sup>57</sup> So too brevity is complemented by explanation, exhortation, and time to help the congregation to feel the significance of God's words in Scripture.<sup>58</sup>

Many of Calvin's skills in dealing with texts and words were honed in his humanist training. So Battles and Hugo note the following features of Calvin's expository style, even when used in his younger years to expound a pagan author. 'Calvin's' [*sic*] aim is quite simple, to ensure that the reader will understand what Seneca is saying.'<sup>59</sup> This intention and ability requires the moral willingness to set aside one's own ideas to focus on the ideas of another, imaginative sympathy in understanding the text written by another person in a different historical context, and the ability to communicate to contemporary readers the ideas and significance of the original author. Finally they observe Calvin's ability to paraphrase, to 'compress matter without loss of meaning,' and they comment on that fact that in paraphrasing he picks up 'the whole context and underlying spirit of Seneca's words.'<sup>60</sup> Calvin wrote of the value of this kind of training: 'How richly deserving of honour are the liberal sciences, which polish man, so as to give him the dignity of true humanity.'<sup>61</sup>

He was also aware of his weaknesses and sins, which lay deep within him. So after a dispute he wrote to Farel: 'There I sinned grievously in not having been able to keep within bounds for so had the bile taken possession of my mind that I poured out bitterness on all sides.'<sup>62</sup>

He seems to speak of himself in these words:

By nature we are almost too irritable, and Satan pushes us to an inhuman rigor under the pretext to strictness. As a result, wretched men, denied forgiveness, are swallowed up by grief and despair.<sup>63</sup>

Calvin worried lest his ministry be counterproductive: 'That I am in danger of being unjust to God's mercy by labouring with so much anxiety to assert it, as if it were doubtful or obscure.'<sup>64</sup>

No wonder Calvin advised those considering the call to be pastors:

Let them therefore ... when they offer themselves to preach the word of God, enter into themselves and seek out the bottom of their thoughts ... that they seek nothing else but to give themselves to God in such a way that they not be unprofitable, but build up the flock.<sup>65</sup>

And he warns against excessive zeal:

Whenever, under the pretext of zeal for perfection, we cannot bear any imperfection either in the body or the members of the church, the devil's inflaming us with pride and seducing us through hypocrisy to abandon the flock of Jesus Christ.<sup>66</sup>

Reynolds asserts Calvin's strong emotional engagement with his people: Calvin sought to enter into an intimate dialogue with the congregation in order to enhance his emotional effectiveness.<sup>67</sup> He claims that Calvin over-identifies with God, and with the Old Testament prophets, and uses sermon for his own needs, and reads his emotions into God and into the text.<sup>68</sup> The danger for Calvin was no inhuman remoteness but over-engaged humanity. Yet, as Reynolds commented, '[t]he congregation is kept on the edge of their seats; they are enticed to come back day after day to hear how the story turned out.'<sup>69</sup> It was Calvin the human in the pulpit by God's appointment, and God used his humanity in his preaching.

In summary, we have seen that the key to Calvin's preaching was his engagement with God who was present in the sermon, with the 'texts' or books of the Bible in expository preaching, and with theology. In Part Two we see that Calvin also engaged with the congregation, engaged with them as hearers, engaged them in training and in God's global gospel plan, and engaged in raising up future preachers.

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#### ENDNOTES

1. The background material for this article is based on my chapter, "Preaching of a lively kind"—Calvin's engaged expository preaching," in Mark D. Thompson, *Engaging Calvin*, Apollos, 2009.
2. Ronald S. Wallace, *Calvin, Geneva, and the Reformation: A Study of Calvin as Social Reformer, Churchman, Pastor and Theologian* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1988), p 17.
3. 'Homiletic' includes every aspect of the activity of preaching, 'rhetoric' to the use of words and language, and *Ars Predicandi* is the traditional name for the study of homiletic.
4. T. H. L. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), pp. 72, 108-27, 188-94.
5. This is a summary of the material given in Charles Smyth, *The Art of Preaching: 747-1939* (London: SPCK, 1940), pp. 19-35.
6. Smyth, *Art of Preaching*, p. 53.
7. Some features of this style have remained in the Western tradition. The Puritan sermon style did not follow the simple model of Calvin, but, with its multiple Doctrines and Uses, became as complex as this medieval model. And the three-fold division of texts and use of simple alliteration is not unknown in evangelical preaching!
8. George Elwes Corrie (ed.), *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, sometime Bishop of Worcester, Martyr, 1555* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1844).
9. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, pp. 79-80.
10. Randall C. Zachman, *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), p. 59.
11. There are also examples of expository preaching from Bernard, Anselm, Bonaventura and Aquinas. See Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, p. 80.
12. Thomas K. Carroll, *Preaching the Word: The Message of the Fathers of the Church*

- (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1984), pp. 63, 197, 206, 220.
13. A. G. P. van der Walt, "Calvin on Preaching," in B. J. van der Walt (ed.), *John Calvin's Institutes: His Magnum Opus* (Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1986), p. 328.
  14. G. W. H. Lampe (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Bible: Vol. 2, The West from the Fathers to the Reformation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1969), pp. 338-491; and A.G.P. van der Walt, "John Calvin and the reformation of Preaching," no editor named. *Our Formational tradition: a rich heritage and lasting vocation*, (Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1984), p. 199.
  15. Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church, Vol. 3, The Medieval Church* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1999), pp. 185-292, 341-440. Wycliffe used vernacular expository preaching, see G. W. H. Parker, *The Morning Star: Wycliffe and the Dawn of the Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1965), pp. 43-51, as did Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, see Smyth, *The Art of Preaching*, p. 54.
  16. See Parker, *Wycliffe*, pp. 43-51.
  17. John H. Leith, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Proclamation of the Word and Its Significance Today," in Timothy George (ed.), *John Calvin & the Church: A Prism of Reform* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), p. 209.
  18. David. Steinmetz, "John Calvin as an Interpreter of the Bible," in Donald McKim, (ed.), *Calvin and the Bible* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), p. 289.
  19. T. H. L. Parker, *The Oracles of God: an Introduction to the Preaching of John Calvin* (London and Redhill: Lutterworth 1947), p. 18.
  20. John Calvin, *Calvin's Theological Treatises*, (trans.) J. K. S. Reid (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 143. See also Mark J. Beach, "The Real Presence of Christ in the Preaching of the Gospel: Luther and Calvin on the nature of Preaching," (*Mid-American Journal of Theology*, 10, 1999): 77-134; and Steven J. Lawson, *The Expository Genius of John Calvin* (Orlando, Reformation Trust, 2007), pp. 28-29.
  21. John Calvin, *Commentary on Isaiah 33-66, Vols. I and II*, (trans.) William Pringle, Calvin Translation Society, Vol. VIII (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981), p. 414 (On Is. 54:14).
  22. John Calvin, *John Calvin's Sermons on Timothy and Titus* (repr 1983 Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1579), p. 665, all references modernized.
  23. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (trans.) F. L. Battles (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 1.7.1.
  24. Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.7.5.
  25. John Calvin. *Harmony of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, Vols. I*

- and II, (trans.) Charles William Bingham, Calvin Translation Society, Volume II (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1981), p. 235 (On Lev. 10:9).
26. Calvin, John, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol., 1 (trans.), W. J. G. McDonald, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, Vol. 6 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 305.
  27. Calvin, *Sermons on Timothy and Titus*, p. 284.
  28. Calvin, *Sermons on Timothy and Titus*, p. 959.
  29. Calvin, *Sermons on Timothy and Titus*, p. 665.
  30. John Calvin, *A Harmony of the Gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke Vol. III, James and Jude*, (trans.) A. W. Morrison, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 129.
  31. John Calvin, *Sermons on Deuteronomy* (reprinted 1987 Edinburgh/Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1583), p. 1206, all references modernized.
  32. John Calvin, *Sermons on Job* (facsimile 1993 Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1574), p. 575, all references modernized.
  33. Calvin, *Deuteronomy*, p. 56.
  34. Wallace, Calvin, Geneva, p. 171.
  35. John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul to the Romans and Thessalonians*, (trans.) R. Mackenzie, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, Vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), p 1.
  36. Lectionary preaching assumes a depth and sophistication of Bible knowledge that is not always present.
  37. Sermon on Psalm 119.5, cited in Lester De Koster, *Light for the City: Calvin's Preaching, Source of Life and Liberty* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 81.
  38. Leith, "Calvin's Proclamation," p. 214.
  39. Calvin, *Inst.* 1.11.5.
  40. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, pp. 160-62, 165-68.
  41. Susan Schreiner, "Calvin as an interpreter of Job," in Donald McKim, (ed.), *Calvin and the Bible* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), pp. 57, 59. See also Susan Schreiner, "Through a Mirror Dimly: Calvin's Sermons on Job," (*Calvin Theological Journal*, 21, 1986), pp. 175-93.
  42. Schreiner, "Calvin interpreter of Job," p. 58.
  43. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is there a meaning in this text?* (Leicester: Apollos, 1998), p. 32.
  44. Dawn DeVries, *Jesus Christ in the Preaching of Calvin and Schleiermacher*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), p. 41.
  45. This section is a summary of material in my "Preaching of a Lively Kind."
  46. Leith, "Calvin's Proclamation of the Word," p. 224.

47. M. Elliott, "Gabler, Johan Philipp," in Donald K. McKim (ed.), *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2007), pp. 452-57.
48. For a summary of Calvin's Biblical Theology, see Peter Adam, *Hearing God's Words: Exploring Biblical Spirituality* (Leicester: Apollos, 2004), pp.119-38.
49. Parker, *Calvin's Preaching*, pp. 95-100.
50. Steinmetz, "John Calvin," p. 291.
51. Zachman, *Calvin as Teacher*, p. 155.
52. John H. Leith, 'Reformed preaching Today' (The Princeton Seminary Bulletin, 10/3, 1989), p. 230.
53. Calvin *Inst.* 1.1.1.
54. Calvin *Inst.* 3.6.1.
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60. Battles and Hugo, *Calvin on Seneca*, p 79.
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68. Reynolds, "Calvin's Exegesis," pp. 85-8.
69. Reynolds, "Calvin's Exegesis," p. 83.