

AN INTERMEDIATE BRILLIANCE: THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE IN CALVIN'S EUCHARISTIC THEOLOGY

Thomas J. Davis

Introduction

One thing is certain about Calvin's view of the Eucharist. Without the Words of Institution, the rite makes no sense. Such a situation Calvin considered tragic, for, according to Calvin, it is the very special function of the Eucharist to make sense of—indeed, to make *sensible*—Christ's union with believers. In order for the Eucharist to function properly, however, the Words of Institution must precede the fraction in an understandable manner, meaning both that the words must be proclaimed loudly and in the native tongue and that, once pronounced, the Words be properly interpreted. When such clear proclamation and exposition of the Words of Institution take place, the eucharistic action involving bread and wine presents to believers what Calvin characterized as the clearest promises of God.

The paper will proceed as follows: after a brief discussion of Calvin's "Manner of Celebrating the Lord's Supper," found in the liturgies of 1542 (Geneva) and 1545 (Strasbourg), we will examine Calvin's ideas on the function of the Words of Institution as they relate to eucharistic doctrine. Next we will look at the function of the eucharistic signs in Calvin's thought. Then we will explore how the proper use of the Words of Institution enables the eucharistic signs to serve as an accommodated instrument of knowledge that gives to believers the greatest certainty humanly possible of their union with Christ. This knowledge, I suggest, is the special gift or grace of the Eucharist, one that enhances enjoyment of the more general gift of bodily communion with Christ. Finally, we will conclude by seeing how it is that the proper use of the Words of Institution distinguishes praise from abomination in the eucharistic celebration.

I.

Calvin's "Manner of Celebrating the Lord's Supper"¹

As one reads the eucharistic portion of Calvin's liturgies, one finds a strong emphasis on the assurance and confidence the sacrament imparts to believers. The faithful hear in the prayer before the Words of Institution² that they should be "assured that it is [God's] good pleasure" to be to them a "gracious Father forever."³ The prayer ends with the request that God grant the faithful in their eucharistic celebration "much greater confidence" in order to proclaim God as father and to glory in him.⁴

In the liturgy, the minister then moves to a proclamation of the Words of Institution as found in I Corinthians 11. There follows an exposition of those words, which includes: 1) an excommunication of the unworthy, 2) a call to examination of conscience, 3) a proclamation of the Supper's benefit to sinners who know themselves as such but who rely on Christ for their righteousness, 4) an exposition of the promises of Christ pledged by the sacrament, and 5) the *sursum corda* with its appeal to lift hearts and minds on high.⁵ Again, Calvin brings to the fore that the Eucharist should be seen as a source of assurance and confidence. The truly penitent should never doubt that they are God's own children. That assurance extends even to those who recognize their imperfections, for the sacrament is a medicine for sick souls; believers are assured that they receive Christ despite imperfections. Christians are exhorted to believe that they partake of Christ and his benefits. In giving himself, Christ gives testimony that all he has belongs to the faithful, and the Eucharist is a further pledge of that exchange. Finally, the bread and wine are invoked as signs and witnesses, revealing that Christ is indeed the true and only nourishment of his people.⁶

At the end of the eucharistic service stands a prayer of thanksgiving. I would point out here that Calvin speaks of two benefits connected with the Holy Supper. The first is communion with Christ, whose body serves as the food of immortality.⁷ The second benefit spoken of has to do with the recognition of that communion as the basis for Christian life. Calvin states it in the negative: "Now grant us this other benefit: that thou wilt never let us forget these things;..."⁸ The Eucharist imprints that communion on the hearts and minds of participants so that, growing in faith, they might praise God and edify neighbor. The question to answer, then is this: How does the Eucharist imprint the Christian's communion with Christ on faithful hearts and minds? To answer that question, we must discuss the Words of Institution as the basis for correct eucharistic doctrine, then examine how the signs, guided by that doctrine, work to help the believer understand and appropriate union with Christ.

II.

The Words of Institution: The Lens of Meaning

Calvin's view of Scripture as a lens that brings creation into focus is well known. I think the concept applies equally well to the relationship between the Words of Institution and the signs of the Eucharist: the words bring the signs into focus, making them clear and sharp. Another way to look at the words is as that which gives meaning to the signs. By themselves, bread and wine are mute; joined to the Words of Institution, they speak God's truth and promise. What is certain is that the Christian must hear the Words of Institution and understand them in order to derive benefit from the eucharistic celebration.

The importance of knowing true doctrine is underscored by Calvin in his commentary on Galatians. In his discussion of Galatians 1:8; Calvin says that "with Christians there is no faith where there is no knowledge." He ties this to worship as well when he states, "The legitimate worship of God...must be preceded by sure knowledge."⁹

We can apply this insistence on the importance of knowledge to the Eucharist. Indeed, Calvin himself does so. In his commentary on the Words of Institution in I Corinthians 11, Calvin underscores the role the Words and their proper interpretation (true doctrine) plays in the eucharistic celebration: "You see bread, and nothing else, but you hear that it is a sign of the body of Christ. Be quite sure that the Lord will carry out what you understand the words to mean: that his body, which you do not see at all, is spiritual food for you."¹⁰ What this passage reveals is that, for Calvin, the benefit of the eucharistic signs is made clear only in the hearing of the words and in the understanding of the words. That is why in his liturgy Calvin not only proclaims, "This is my body" over the bread but also explains the meaning. Only by such a procedure is it possible to discern the body of the Lord in the rite.

The entire eucharistic celebration serves as a source of knowledge, I will argue. But it is important to note in connection with the Words of Institution that the Eucharist as a specially-accommodated source of knowledge about communion with Christ depends on correct knowledge about the Eucharist. That is, in order for the Lord's Supper to fulfill its function as the instrument which most clearly shows forth God's promise, proper doctrine must frame the celebration.

Calvin addresses just this concern in his "Short Treatise on the Holy Supper." In the first paragraph of the work, Calvin voices his concern over the "errors," "divergent opinions," and "contentious disputes" to which the Eucharist had been subjected.¹¹ Such an environment, Calvin indicates, worked to the detriment of "many weak consciences" who, because of the controversy surrounding the Eucharist, could not "fairly resolve what view they ought to take of it."¹² Calvin then asserts that "it is a very perilous thing to have no certainty on an ordinance, the understanding of which is so requisite for our salvation."¹³

It is, of course, Calvin's objective to supply just this requisite understanding. However, he sees himself not acting on his own but following the intentions of Jesus Christ himself. As

Calvin explains, “The principal thing recommended by our Lord is to celebrate with true understanding. From this it follows that the essential part lies in the doctrine.”¹⁴ Of course, for Calvin this means that the whole is referred to the Word, specifically the Words of Institution, for it is from here that the sacrament derives its virtue.¹⁵ It is in the Words that the Eucharist is fully explained and the promises clearly proclaimed. In other words, through the reading and exposition of the Words of Institution the Eucharist can be understood for what it is supposed to do: show forth and present to the believer the true communion he or she has with the body and blood of Christ.

Calvin continued his emphasis on the necessity for a proper understanding (true doctrine) of the Eucharist in order for its witness to be appropriated by believers in his commentaries. It can be seen, for example, in his commentary on the Words of Institution as found in the gospels. The Words are to awaken eucharistic participants to the mystery at hand in the Supper and to make it clear that there is a focused picture of the reality of that mystery, that mystery being true communion with the body and blood of Christ. At the time of the institution, Calvin explains, Christ aroused his disciples “from their inertia, that they should be attentive to such a sublime mystery.”¹⁶ Likewise, the Words of Institution serve the same purpose for all who partake of the Holy Meal—they awaken weak human consciences to the nature of the divine mystery. Besides alerting weak souls to the mystery, the Words also clarify the rite. Calvin speaks of Jesus’ action in relation to the Passover: “Reason itself demands that this clear testimony of the life of the Spirit should be distinct from the old shadow.”¹⁷ If the Passover, as Calvin thought, related to the Eucharist as shadow to the brilliance of sunlight, it is certainly the Words of Institution that serve to cast the fullness of day on the signs of bread and wine.

The clarity the Words bring to the celebration is the consecration, or eucharistic conversion, in Calvin’s opinion. The emphasis on the Words as true doctrine is again unmistakable. “But we must hold at the same time,” Calvin explains, “that the bread is not consecrated by whispering and blowing, but by the clear teaching of faith.”¹⁸ Consecration or conversion is understood by Calvin to indicate a change in the use, not substance, of the signs. It is the appointment of an earthly sign to serve a heavenly purpose. Thus, the consecration of the bread and wine, accomplished by the Words of the Institution, is nothing other than God’s testimony that such an earthly sign is put to heavenly use. That being so, it is logical to assert, as Calvin does, that consecration cannot take place unless God’s “command and promise are heard clearly for the upbuilding of faith.”¹⁹ Thus, any real celebration of the Lord’s Supper depends completely on the Words of Institution, without which there is no consecration or conversion.

Of course, the proper use of the Words of Institution is twofold: the Words must be proclaimed, but they must also be interpreted. In Calvin’s view, that interpretation takes place not only in the explication he gives in the “Manner of Celebrating the Lord’s Supper,” but also in the preaching, the sermon.²⁰ In a line new with the 1543 *Institutes*, Calvin claims the importance of such preaching for the proper functioning of the signs: “Therefore, when we hear mention made of the sacramental word, let us understand the promise, which, preached with a clear voice by the minister, leads the people by the hand where the sign aims and directs us.”²¹

This emphasis is underlined in the 1545 liturgy prepared for use in Strasbourg. There, in his instructions for the use of “The Manner of Celebrating the Lord’s Supper,” Calvin is explicit about what is involved in leading the people by the hand. He states that the people should be instructed about four things. The first is that human beings are sinful by nature, heirs to Adam’s sin, and therefore unable, because of “being in the flesh,” of inheriting the kingdom of God. Calvin then asserts that the people should be taught that only Christ and his death can bring about remission of sin. Third, Calvin says the people should be instructed to know that Christ gives himself in the sacrament of the supper, and that by partaking of him the Christian gains all his benefits. Finally, the people should be taught to give thanks for God’s great gifts.²² These four points can all be derived, in Calvin’s thought, from the Institution of the Supper itself.

These four points of Instruction are important in Calvin's opinion because they provide the proper understanding and context for the celebration of the Eucharist. With proper eucharistic doctrine fully explained, the Eucharist can then serve its chief end and goal: to proclaim and exhibit the forgiveness of sins that results from communion with Christ. The Words of Institution are preached, then, "in order that we know how much it is necessary that Christ live in us, and we in him."²³ They are the lens that clarify and give meaning to the signs.

II.

Bread and Wine: Earthly Mirrors of Divine Truth

The question, of course, arises (and did arise), if the Word makes plain the meaning of the Eucharistic signs, are the signs at all necessary? Some in Calvin's time (and ours) thought not. However, Calvin considered the signs essential. To refer back to the prayer of thanksgiving in Calvin's "Manner of Celebrating the Lord's Supper," it is the special function of the signs to imprint upon the believer's heart her/his communion with Christ. The imprinting process requires that physical signs accompany the word for two reasons: the necessity of God's condescension because of human weakness and the requirement that Christians follow God's commands. We will examine the issue of human weakness first.

Calvin explains the necessity of the eucharistic signs at length in his "Short Treatise on the Holy Supper." He begins the work with a concern over weak consciences. Though the phrasing may sound as if Calvin is addressing certain individuals who have problems of understanding that others may not have, it soon becomes clear that, from Calvin's viewpoint, human nature is, in its fallen state, weak and incapable of understanding what it should about things divine. This viewpoint stands at the center of Calvin's eucharistic thought; it is what requires that there be a Eucharist. "For seeing we are so weak that we cannot receive him [Christ] with true heartfelt trust," Calvin states, "when he is presented to us by simple doctrine and preaching, the father of mercy, disdaining not to condescend in this matter to our infirmity, has been pleased to add to his word a visible sign by which he might represent the substance of his promises, to confirm and fortify us by delivering us from doubt and uncertainty."²⁴ The eucharist is to take care of doubt and uncertainty that arises because, by nature Christians cannot be sure that they have communion with Christ, body and blood. Even to the Christian mind, Calvin thinks such communion is "mysterious" and "incomprehensible." The faith of the Christian is such that it is always in need of help.²⁵ Calvin is clear that it is because of this weakness in the Christian believer that God, in his mercy, instituted the sacrament. The Eucharist is, therefore, that "special remedy,"²⁶ as Calvin calls it, that human nature requires in order to better grasp that communion with the body and blood of Christ as the source of salvation.

The bread and wine are, therefore, accommodated instruments God uses to help Christians grasp the essentials of their salvation. This accommodation is to human understanding: "we are on our part so rude and gross that we cannot understand the least things of God," Calvin claims, and so "it is important that we should be given to understand it [communion with the body and blood of Christ] as far as our capacity would admit."²⁷

Calvin uses the metaphor of mirror to describe this accommodative process.²⁸ God uses earthly signs to reflect divine truth. These signs are used because, as the human is an earthly creature, the signs are earthly and easily comprehended; there is a continuity between the perceiver and the perceived. Earthly existence depends upon the senses, and it is with great emphasis upon those senses that Calvin describes the mirrors of bread and wine: "Now there cannot be a spur which can pierce us more to the quick than when he [God] makes us, so to speak, see with the eye, touch with the hand, and distinctively perceive this inestimable blessing of feeding on his own substance."²⁹ Inasmuch as human understanding at least starts with human perception, God has come down to the level of humanity in the way he presents the truth of the Christian's communication with the body and blood of Christ. Of course, Calvin is clear that the purpose of those earthly signs is to move the believer beyond the earthly to the divine, so there can be no

preoccupation with the material signs. However, they serve as the first rung on a ladder of ascension to communion with Christ in heaven.

It should be noted that this notion of the need for the external means to mediate God's presence is not peculiar to Calvin's view of the sacramental signs; rather, he thinks God always comes in mediated form, whether to the Old Testament patriarches or to the disciples in Jesus Christ, the accommodation *par excellence* of God, or to the church. There is no direct communication with God—it is always mediated.³⁰ The use of earthly signs has always been used. Calvin says that “God from the first manifested himself by visible symbols that he might gradually raise believers to himself, and conduct them by earthly rudiments to spiritual knowledge.”³¹ To speak of the bread and wine, then, as accommodated instruments that convey knowledge of God and his presence is, for Calvin, to speak of God's usual way of communicating himself to the elect. Thus, such an accommodation is a gift and vitally necessary for Christian life. After all, it is God himself who has decided that the Eucharist is the best means to convey knowledge of communion with the body and blood of Christ. It is also one of the ways God has chosen to effectively exhibit and give that communion to believers.

Therefore, as has been shown, one of the reasons the external signs are necessary is that they are required by the weakness of humankind. However, along with this reason stands another, which Calvin also considers very important. God commands their use. Moreover, though they can be distinguished, this command cannot be separated from God's promise. Calvin makes this clear in his commentaries.

In his comments on Matthew 26:27, Calvin addresses those who claim they can be partakers of Christ without external means. He labels such persons “impious.” He states, “Nothing is more odd than for the faithful freely to do without the assistance handed down by the Lord or allow themselves to be deprived and nothing is more intolerable than to tear apart the mystery in this way.”³² Thus, it is clear that Calvin thinks sign must accompany word.

If we move to Calvin's commentary on I Corinthians, he is even more explicit about the relationship between the Word of promise and the sacramental signs as external means to appropriate that Word. To start with, Christians cannot dispense with the sacramental signs because God commands they be used. Calvin is clear about what this means. “If we do not obey this commandment of his, all our boasting about having His promise is to no avail.” Calvin goes on to explain that “the promise is bound up with the commandment, as if the latter were a condition; the promise therefore only becomes effective if the condition is fulfilled....What we have to do is to obey God's commandment so that He may carry out what he has promised us; otherwise we deprive ourselves of its fulfillment.”³³ Obedience to God's commands is part of the Christian's faithful response to God. If the command is dismissed, there is a lack of faith, which precludes reception of what God offers.

Having established that the eucharistic signs are necessary for the Christian believer³⁴ because of human need and God's command, still the question remains: what heavenly reality does the earthly mirrors reflect?

The bread and the wine are, for Calvin, figures of the body and blood of Christ: they exhibit on a natural plane what is given through the power of the Holy Spirit—Christ's true body. As the earthly elements sustain physical life, so Christ's body sustains spiritual life.

Calvin states in his John commentary that everything that relates to the new life of the Christian is called “food.” Moreover, he explains that when Jesus used the word “bread” what he meant to convey is the notion of “nourishment.” Therefore, when Christ spoke of his flesh as meat, according to Calvin, he “means that souls are sustained if they lack that food. You will only find life in Christ when you seek the substance of life in His flesh.”³⁵ The whole of salvation is accomplished in union with the flesh of the Mediator. That union is symbolized in the eating of eucharistic bread and wine. Therefore, because of the scriptural principle of metonymy, Christians

call bread and wine the body and blood of Christ. Look into those mirrors and there exhibited is the true Christ.

Such a clear exhibition of the flesh of Christ works to take the Christian's spirit, literally, out of this world into the kingdom of heaven, which is where union with Christ is enjoyed. The sign is imperative for that ascension. Calvin says "this [ascension] cannot take place without the help of a figure or sign."³⁶ Thus, the name of body is transferred to the bread so that the figure may work to bring about the transition from the earthly to the heavenly.³⁷ Bread and wine are true mirrors of Christ; but it is important, in Calvin's opinion, to understand that they are mirrors that reflect upward.³⁸

III.

The Clearest Promises of God: The Eucharistic Gift of Knowledge

In the 1539 *Institutes*, there is a new emphasis on the intellectual nature of faith, and that emphasis is applied to the sacraments. Calvin writes, "whatever is clearer, accordingly it is more capable of sustaining faith. And in truth, the sacraments convey the clearest promises..."³⁹ By intellectual, I mean an emphasis on *intellectus*, understanding. It is the special gift of the Eucharist, with the Word and sacramental signs working in tandem, to increase the Christian's understanding of life in Christ in a way not otherwise possible.

We can look at the issues by briefly referring to Calvin's Genevan catechism. Calvin is clear that communion with Christ comes through the Gospel as well as the Supper. Thus, why is the Eucharist necessary? It is necessary because communion with Christ, offered through the Gospel, is "confirmed and increased" in the Supper. This means, for Calvin, that the Eucharist functions in such a way that "we may certainly know that reconciliation belongs to us."⁴⁰ It is important, therefore, not only that Christ dwell in the Christian, united as one flesh, but it is also important for the believer's growth in the Christian life to "recognise that he [Christ] dwells in us, and that we are united to him...[and] that by virtue of this union we may become partakers of all his blessings."⁴¹ In other words, proper knowledge and recognition of the source of salvation is a constituent part of growth into that salvation. The Eucharist helps piety grow; growth in piety enables a better grasp of doctrine; a better grasp of doctrine enables greater understanding of the sacramental signs; a heightened awareness of the signs leads to greater recognition of union with Christ, which leads to increased piety. Word and sacrament together, each building the other up, to accomplish growth in the Christian life. The Words of Institution that enliven the sacramental signs give a special understanding, assurance, and certainty to Christians.

One of Calvin's comments on baptism reinforces this view of the sacraments as especially geared to provide certainty through the knowledge it brings to believers. In his Acts commentary, Calvin speaks of how the sacrament of baptism can be called the laver of the soul at Paul's baptism, when plainly the Spirit serves as the formal cause of regeneration. Calvin states that when Luke speaks of washing, he "is not describing the cause, but is referring to Paul's understanding, for, by receiving the symbol, he grasped better that his sins were expiated..."⁴² If we work by analogy to the Holy Supper, we can say that it is the Spirit that effects union with Christ, and that the presentation of Christ's body and blood through bread and wine refers to the Christian's understanding. The symbols enable the faithful to better grasp and understand the reality.

In the 1559 *Institutes*, Calvin adds a most enlightening line that seems to sum up much of his life's thought on what happens when the Word is added to a visible sign; in our case, when the Words of Institution are appropriately joined to the sacramental signs. He declares that "The Father of lights cannot be hindered from illumining our minds with a sort of intermediate brilliance through the sacraments, just as he illumines our bodily eyes by the rays of the sun."⁴³ Such a statement emphasizes the gift of knowledge and its mediated nature.

Of course, it may be appropriate to ask if this emphasis on knowledge in the Eucharist does not overshadow what Calvin considers to be the substantial gift given there—Christ himself. I do not think so. I would suggest that the specific gift of knowledge in the Eucharist leads to a greater delight in the more general gift—Christ himself. Heightened recognition of union enhances the actual communion itself. It is a matter of knowing what it is one has.

And here we are back to the Words of Institution. They tell the believer what the signs mirror. They enable the signs to serve their function. They work with the signs to graphically display in the most humanly comprehensible way the mystery of Christ's union with his elect. Thus, without the Words and their explication, as found in Calvin's liturgy, Calvin believes the rite yields no edification; this is his complaint against the Roman mass.⁴⁴ If the Words are not clearly proclaimed and explained, there is no lens of meaning for the signs; without their proper meaning, the signs cannot serve as mirrors; therefore, the rite cannot convey knowledge, leaving the participant with no assurance of salvation. It is because of this situation that Calvin considered the mass an abomination.

However, when the Supper is appropriately celebrated, Word and sign held together, when the Eucharist truly mediates union with Christ and knowledge thereof, it leads the Christian believer to "praise [God] openly, so as to let men know, when we are in their company, what we are aware of within ourselves in the presence of God."⁴⁵ In other words, a proper Eucharist evokes gratitude, which is, according to Calvin, the chief end of human existence. Since the Supper provides the clearest expression of the mystical union, it should evoke the clearest expression of gratitude, which results in thankfulness to God and love toward neighbors.⁴⁶

NOTES

¹The “Manner of Celebrating the Lord’s Supper” constitutes the eucharistic portion of Calvin’s “Form of Prayers.” For an English translation, see Bard Thompson, ed., *Liturgies of the Western Church* (New York: Meridian Books, 1961), pp. 197-203 for “Form of Church Prayers” and pp. 203-8 for the “Manner”; for the original, see John Calvin, *Ioannis Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia* (hereafter cited CO), 59 vols., edited by W. Baum, E. Cunitz, and E. Reuss (Brunsvigae: C.A. Schwetscke, 1863-1900), 6:172-84 for “Form” and 6:192-202 for “Manner.”

²The prayer comes before the confession of faith in the Genevan liturgy and after the confession in the Strasbourg liturgy. See Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 202-5; CO 6:179-80 (Geneva), 197 (Strasbourg).

³Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 202 (Geneva) and 205 (Strasbourg); CO 6:179 (Geneva) and 197 (Strasbourg).

⁴Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 203 (Geneva) and 205 (Strasbourg); CO 6:180 (Geneva) and 197 (Strasbourg).

⁵Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 205-7; CO 6:197-200.

⁶Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 206-7; CO 6:198-200.

⁷“...whom thou givest as the meat and drink of life eternal.” Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 203 and 208; CO 6:180.

⁸Thompson, *Liturgies*, pp. 203 and 208; CO 6:180.

⁹John Calvin, *Calvin’s New Testament Commentaries* (hereafter cited CNTC), 12 vols., edited by David W. Torrance and Thomas J. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959-1970), 11:14; CO 50:173.

¹⁰CNTC 11:24; CO 49:488.

¹¹John Calvin, “Short Treatise on the Holy Supper,” in *John Calvin: Selections from His Writings* (hereafter cited as “Short Treatise”), edited by John Dillenberger (Missoula: Scholar’s Press, 1975), p. 507; CO 5:433.

¹²“Short Treatise,” p. 508; CO 5:433.

¹³“Short Treatise,” p. 508; CO 5:433.

¹⁴“Short Treatise,” p. 533; CO 5:454.

¹⁵“Short Treatise,” p. 534; CO 5:454-55.

¹⁶Comment on Matthew 26:26, CNTC 3:132; CO 45:704.

¹⁷Comment on Matthew 26:26, CNTC 3:132; CO 45:704.

¹⁸Comment on Matthew 26:26, CNTC 3:132; CO 45:706.

¹⁹CNTC 3:134; CO 45:706.

²⁰Thompson, *Liturgies*, p. 204; CO 6:197.

²¹“Ergo quum de verbo sacramenti fieri mentionem audimus, promissionem intelligamus, quae clara voce a ministro praedicata plebem eo man ducat, quo signum tendit ac nos dirigit.” CO 1:940.

²²CO 6:196.

²³CO 6:196.

²⁴“Short Treatise,” p. 510; CO 5:435.

²⁵“Short Treatise,” p. 510, 514, 515; CO 5:435, 439.

²⁶“Short Treatise,” p. 522; CO 5:445.

²⁷“Short Treatise,” p. 511; CO 5:435.

²⁸“Short Treatise,” p. 511; CO 5:437.

²⁹“Short Treatise,” p. 516-17; CO 5:440.

³⁰See H. Jackson Forstman, *Word and Spirit: Calvin's Doctrine of Biblical Authority* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962) p. 9.

³¹This statement is found in Calvin's second treatise against Westphal. CO 9:84.

³²CNTC 3:138; CO 45:710.

³³Comment on 1 Corinthians 11:24, CNTC 9:244; CO 49:485.

³⁴Just because they are indispensable for the believer does not mean that God cannot work without them. From the human perspective, they are necessary; from the divine perspective, they are not.

³⁵Comment on John 6:55, CNTC 4:170; CO 47:155.

³⁶This statement is found in Calvin's third treatise against Westphal, the “Last Admonition.” CO 9:162.

³⁷Such a transfer of name, however, requires that the believer be clearly taught that it is, in fact, the function of such signs to raise the believer to God's presence. Therefore, the sign must retain its own nature rather than its reality being collapsed into the divine nature. Otherwise, Christ is brought down rather than the soul being elevated.

³⁸In his comments on Matthew 26:29, Calvin is explicit in his use of the mirror image and its function to lead upward. It is important to note that it is, however, the crucified Christ that is mirrored. Calvin states that Jesus “...set His death before their eyes as in a mirror....” If it is the Supper that mirrors Christ, the image of Christ reflected is that of Jesus on the cross. Here Calvin switches metaphors to get across the ascension function of such an image: “They had to be guided to Christ's death that they might use it as a ladder to ascend into heaven....” CNTC 3:136-37; CO 45:709.

³⁹CO 1:941. Jean-Daniel Benoit has shown that the 1539 *Institutes* makes more of the intellectual nature of faith. See Benoit, “The History and Development of the Institutio: How Calvin Worked,” in *John Calvin*, edited by G.E. Duffield (Appleford, England: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1966), p. 104.

⁴⁰CO 6:125/126.

⁴¹CO 6:125/126.

⁴²Comment on Acts 22:16, CNTC 7:218; CO 48:496-97.

⁴³*Institutes* 4.14.10.

⁴⁴“Short Treatise,” p. 535; CO 5:456.

⁴⁵Comment on I Corinthians 11:26, CNTC 9:250; CO 49:490.

⁴⁶Comment on I Corinthians 11:24, CNTC 9:243; CO 49:485.