

## SYLLABUS

*Calvin is a cataract, a primeval forest, a demonic power,  
something directly down from Himalaya, absolutely Chinese,  
strange, mythological;  
I lack completely the means, the suction cups,  
even to assimilate this phenomenon, not to speak of presenting it adequately.*

*What I receive is only a thin little stream  
and what I can then give out again is only a yet thinner extract of this little stream.*

*I could gladly and profitably set myself down  
and spend all the rest of my life just with Calvin.*

*Karl Barth—June 8, 1922*

1. The participant who completes this course:
  - 1.1. should have a significant, first-hand acquaintance with the major theological work of John Calvin, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
  - 1.2. should have a solid grasp of Calvin's place in his immediate context and in the larger context of the Reformed tradition.
  - 1.3. should have an acquaintance with some of the more important interpretative issues related to Calvin and his role in the Reformed tradition.
  - 1.4. should have a basic understanding of Calvin's approach to biblical interpretation and preaching.
  - 1.5. should have developed research and writing skills through producing a research paper on some topic related to the seminar.
  - 1.5. should have developed critical reading and writing skills through producing a critical book review.
2. Requirements
  - 2.1. Class participation

Attendance is expected.

Participation is expected. Participants should come to class prepared to lead a discussion of any assigned material.

## 2.2. Reading

Most of the assigned reading will come from the following works:

- Philip Benedict. *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*. (N.B. The participant should come to the August 20 class meeting prepared to discuss this work.)
- John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. (Battles/McNeill edition)
- John Calvin. *Sermons on Micah*. (Farley edition)
- Richard Muller. *The Unaccommodated Calvin*.
- William G. Naphy. *Calvin and the Consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*. (N.B. The participant should come to the August 27 class meeting prepared to discuss this work.)
- François Wendel. *Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought*.

Participants are expected to read all of the assigned materials and to contribute productively to class discussions.

The Westminster/John Knox Press edition of Calvin's *Institutes* (translated by Ford Lewis Battles and edited by John T. McNeill) will be used for class discussion. Sections of the *Institutes* that should be read with special care are highlighted in **bold** in the class calendar.

Participants are encouraged to read extensively from other material that may be mentioned in class or may be related to material discussed in class.

At the end of the course each participant will submit a record of precisely what has been read for the class and whether required reading was completed by the due date.

Participants are expected to read (and critique) each of the research papers produced for the seminar *before it is presented* with a view to contributing to a discussion of the paper.

## 2.3. Critical book review

Each participant will prepare a critical review of Muller's *The Unaccommodated Calvin*. This review is due at the beginning of class on Oct. 29.

## 2.4. Research paper

Each participant will write an essay of ca. 4000 words such as might be submitted to a "refereed" historical or theological journal.

The topic should be chosen in consultation with the instructor.

A copy of the essay should be made available to each participant by 8:00 am on Saturday of the week before the essay is to be presented. An outline of the “argument” of the paper should be included. This will normally consist of one statement for each paragraph of the paper.

A brief (ca. ½ page) critique of each research paper should be produced.

Each participant should plan on a 25-30 minute presentation of the paper in class. 15-20 minutes will be allowed for questions.

Following the oral presentation, the presenter will need to do whatever rewriting and editing may be necessary to produce a finished work.

### 3. Grading

It is expected that participants will complete all of the required reading. Grades will be assigned largely on the basis of the quality of the research paper (ca. 80%) and the book review (ca. 20%). Attendance, class participation, and completed reading may also affect the grade.

#### 4. Class Calendar

\* Normally the class will meet from 8:00–10:00 am.

Aug. 20	1	Overview of the Reformed Tradition	Benedict. <i>Christ's Churches Purely Reformed</i> (entire book)
Aug. 27	2	Calvin's life	Wendel, pp. 9-149; 357-60 Naphy. <i>Calvin and the Consolidation of the Genevan Reformation</i> (entire book) <i>Sermons on Micah #1 &amp; #2</i>
Sept. 3	3	Book I The Knowledge of God the Creator	Wendel, pp. 150-69; <i>Institutes</i> , Introductory material; I.i-ix <b>(John Calvin to the Reader; I.i-ix)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #3 &amp; #4</i>
Sept. 10	4	Book I The Knowledge of God the Creator	Wendel, pp. 169-184; <i>Institutes</i> I.x-xviii <b>(I.x-xviii)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #5 &amp; #6</i>
Sept. 17	5	Book II The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ	Wendel, pp. 185-208; <i>Institutes</i> II.i-ix <b>(II.i-iv; vii-ix)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #7 &amp; #8</i>
Sept. 24	6	Book II The Knowledge of God the Redeemer in Christ	Wendel, pp. 208-232; <i>Institutes</i> II.x-xvii <b>(II.x-xii.5; xv-xvii)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #9 &amp; #10</i>
Oct. 1	7	Book III The Way in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ	Wendel, pp. 233-55; <i>Institutes</i> III.i-x <b>(III.i-iii; vi-x)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #11 &amp; #12</i>
Oct. 15	8	Book III The Way in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ	Wendel, pp. 255-290; <i>Institutes</i> III.xi-xxv <b>(III.xi-xvi.1; xvii.1-5; xviii.1-4; xix-xx.20; xxi; xxiii-xxiv.14)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #13 &amp; #14</i>

Oct. 22	9	Book IV The External Means or Aids by Which God Invites Us into the Society of the Church and Holds Us Therein	Wendel, pp. 291-311; <i>Institutes</i> IV.I-XIII <b>(IV.i; iii; viii-ix; xii.1-10)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #15 &amp; #16</i>
Oct. 29	10	Book IV The External Means or Aids by Which God Invites Us into the Society of the Church and Holds Us Therein	Wendel, pp. 312-55; <i>Institutes</i> IV.xiv-xx <b>(IV.xiv-xvii.33; 39-41; xx.1-7; 15)</b> <i>Sermons on Micah #17 &amp; #18</i> Review of <i>The Unaccommodated Calvin</i>
Nov. 5	11	Presentations	
Nov. 12	12	Presentations	