

## Geneva in Turmoil

- Cardinal Sadoletto – wanted to bring protestants back into the church: tried to persuade Genevans back to Rome
- Genevans didn't know how to respond, forwarded letter to Bern for advice
- 1539, Calvin writes response to Sadoletto – it was a masterpiece based on the root cause of the Reformation: lays out what the church is and the basis for moving over to the reformation
- The response, which defended the city and the reformation also convinces many that Calvin is not a troublemaker or fanatic
- Calvin's friends in Bern pushed for Calvin's reinstatement to Geneva
- Calvin is invited back by those who wanted reform, and favored the alliance with Bern
- Geneva sent an armed entourage to lead Calvin back in September 1541
- Calvin returns a changed man, and was not enthusiastic about the return
- Gave him a large home, a good income, and attempt to make him the "Luther of the city", encouraged him to become the leader
- Calvin sets a modest tone, humbled by his experiences and vindicated by this return
- Focus is as pastor, and furthering the pastoral care of the City to be led by Pastors who were better educated, Biblical men to help reform the city
- Calvin preached twice on Sunday, as well as Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- He later changed his schedule to preach every day of alternate weeks as well as twice on Sunday, averaging around 250 1 hour sermons per year
- Weekdays, he went through the Old Testament, Sundays, the New
- At one point, the church hired a stenographer to take down his sermons
- Over the next twelve years, 2,043 sermons were recorded and printed. These remain with us today
- The church again exercised Christian discipline with a rigor not previously known, again causing some controversy

## Calvin's leadership in Geneva

- Upon Calvin's return, Geneva was half reformed
- City was run by the magistrates
- Creates a series of Ecclesiastical Ordinances, which being signed into law by the government, placed the governing of the church of Geneva into the hands of the Consistory, including pastors and elders
- Designates Company of pastors and consistory
  - Company of pastors who met every Friday morning for worship and meetings
  - Congregation – 1 pastor elected to deliver a sermon – Sermon + discussion, feedback from other pastors
- Consistory: City court (a political body) for Christian life, would exercise discipline
  - Chide people for poor attendance
  - Encourage people for recommit to biblical pattern of life
  - Child abuse, drunkenness
- Pastors, Deacons, Elders, Doctors

### **A day in the week in Geneva:**

- Sunday and Wednesday: church service
- Other days optional, but sermons were preached daily
- Men and women sat separately – women and children in front (best seats in the house) and men behind (take the worst seats)
- Psalm singing: (model from Bucer) – wanted word of God in their minds
  - These people had spent their lives listening, not singing, idea was to change this
- Communion 4 times per year (he wanted monthly communion)

Control, + pathways for spiritual growth

### **The trial of Servetus**

- Not all embraced the reforms Calvin brought, or the discipline
- One example was that of Michael Servetus
- Servetus was a well-known Spanish physician and scientist at the forefront of his community
  - Identified the function of the heart was to drive the circulation through the body
- Held a number of heretical treatises, arguing against the trinity,
- Had been on trial by the catholic Inquisition in France before escaping to Switzerland
- Was charged with 38 offences
  - Papacy was invention of the devil
  - No original sin
  - No Trinity
  - Pantheistic (God and creation are not separate)
  - Apocalyptic – world would in in 16<sup>th</sup> century (driving force in his actions) – martyrdom seems his goal
- Highly argumentative by nature and obsessed with Calvin, writing him dozens of letters
- Calvin tires of Servetus, and notifies city of Vienna that Servetus was there
- Servetus flees to Geneva where he is discovered and arrested
- Calvin knew Servetus for many years going back to Paris, where they sparred over issues like soul sleep
- Servetus was known for extreme views, and openly suggested moving to Geneva to debate with Calvin
- Calvin attempts to dissuade him from doing this on grounds of personal safety, claiming “my authority is of no avail” (meaning he cannot protect Servetus)
- Advice was sought from other Swiss Cantons, ultimately was unanimously decided to condemn the man from all sides
- Servetus was finally burned to death (Calvin had argued for beheading)
- Heresy was not just a difference of opinion, but a prelude to chaos
- Requested to send Servetus back to Vienna
- 1553, Servetus is burned to death
- Melanchthon praises Calvin’s decision
- Growing minority voice of people opposed to violence in response
  - 1557 – book published “A History of the Death of Servetus” promotes cessation of execution of heretics

- Servetus later linked to enlightenment thinkers
- His writings are recognized by Unitarians as being foundational to their own movement

### **Calvin's last years**

- Calvin was sick for much of his life
- Involved in many controversies, including fallout from Servetus
- Addressing split in Lutheranism – Philipists, Gensio-Lutherans
  - Joachim Westphal – antagonist to Melanchthon
  - Regarded Reformed camp as Sacramentarians along with Melanchthon, who befriended many Reformed
  - Calvin steps in in 1555, writes in defense of Reformed position on the sacrament
- 1558 Farel marries at 59 years old
  - Calvin is upset, says this will hurt the protestant cause
  - Issue causes scandal, Calvin breaks off relationship
- Toward the end of his life, Calvin worked on expanding his Institutes publishing the last edition in 1559, which was 4 times the size of the first
- Becomes one of most successful, most published tract on theology in English language
- At this time his health deteriorated
- On Feb 26, 1564 he gave his last lecture on Ezekiel 20.
- He died on May 27<sup>th</sup> at age 55 in the arms of Theodore Beza
- His last words were “How Long oh Lord?” (Psalm 79:5)
- He was buried the following day, wrapped in a plain shroud and placed in a plain wooden casket with no pomp and laid to rest in an unmarked grave

### **Calvin's Legacy and the furtherance of the Reformed Confession**

- Established the Academy of Geneva, which was inaugurated on June 5, 1559
- Melanchthon revered him as the most able interpreter of Scripture in the church, and called him “The Theologian”
- Spurgeon said Calvin “propounded truth more clearly than any other man that ever breathed, knew more of Scripture and explained it more clearly”
- Among those who have been born of women, there has not risen a greater than John Calvin. No age before him as ever produced his equal, and no age afterwards has ever produced his rival
- A Theological Standard – Luther introduced ideas; Calvin systematized them
- His influence spread throughout the world, promoting the establishment of Reformed, Presbyterian and Congregational churches, and influenced the teaching of Baptist churches

### **England and Scotland**

- Henry VIII was “a Catholic without the Pope”, anti-reformed
- Cranmer, others attempt to slowly guide people to Protestantism

- Mary Tudor becomes Queen in 1553, suppressed Protestantism, takes England back to Protestantism
  - Marian Exiles – many going to Protestant areas
  - John Knox among these
    - Unique beliefs include the right to kill a monarch
- Knox moves to Geneva and embraces reformed teaching, takes them back to Scotland
- Knox committed to Calvin and the Reformed Faith
- Knox – 1558 “On the monstrous Regiment of Women” – Women have no right to rule
- Elizabeth comes to the throne (a Protestant) – was not a big fan of Knox, or by extension - Calvin
- Debate during Elizabeth how to continue reformation in England
  - Pro-Calvin
  - Anti-Calvin
- This debate gave rise to Puritanism, which in turn was foundational in the nascent American colonies
- Among the first American settlements during the 1500 are those of Huguenots living in what is now SC and FL

### **Overview of Various Views of the Sacrament:**

Medieval scholastic theologians had distinguished various modes of presence, or ways of being present.

- Local presence to describe the way in which physical, finite things are present in a circumscribed place.
- Spiritual presence described the way in which spiritual beings (such as angels, souls, or God) are present.
- Illocal presence, for example, described the way in which finite spiritual beings (for example, human souls or angels) are present
- Repletive presence described the way in which an infinite spiritual being (God) is present.

### **Transubstantiation (Catholic view):**

“Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” (Mathew 26:26)

“And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood of the[a] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Mathew 26: 27-28)

- Bread and wine are miraculously changed into body and blood of Christ
- The body of Christ is present even after the communion is over
  - Basis: philosophy of Aristotle
    - Substance vs. accident
      - Accident: external, perceivable quality of an object

- Substance or essence of an object
  - Two miracles took place during communion: Substance of bread and wine changes into the substance of the body and blood of Christ
  - Accidents remain same

### **Memorialism (Zwingli's View):**

"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for[f] you. Do this in remembrance of me."[g] 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (I Corinthians 11: 23 – 26)

- The only mode of presence proper to the human body of Christ was "local presence." Therefore, according to Zwingli, Christ's body is locally present in heaven and nowhere else until the Second Advent.
- "This is my body" should be read, "This signifies my body." He claimed that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic memorial, an initiatory ceremony in which the believer pledges that he is a Christian and proclaims that he has been reconciled to God through Christ's shed blood.

### **Consubstantiation (Luther's view)**

"For this is my blood of the<sup>d</sup> covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

(Mathew 26:28)

- Luther rejected Zwingli's view, claiming that other modes of presence were proper to Christ's human body — specifically the illocal mode of presence.
- Because Christ's body can be present in an illocal manner, according to Luther, it can be present in the bread of the Lord's Supper.
- There is a "sacramental union" between the substance of Christ's body and the bread resulting in a new and unique substance that Luther refers to as fleischbrot ("flesh-bread"). Thus, according to Luther, Christ's human body is present in the Lord's Supper supernaturally in a real and illocal manner.
- Bread is still bread, wine is still wine, but Christ's body and blood are "in, under, around and behind the bread and wine"
- Analogy used to explain this is that of fire applied to iron, whereby the iron remains iron, but is impacted by the fire
- The elements don't become the body and blood of Christ, but rather the body and blood of Christ are supernaturally added to the elements (real presence)
- Discussions concerning the presence of Christ obscure the main significance associated with the sacrament: "These words, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins",

show us that the sacrament forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation...Whosoever believes in these words has exactly what they say: "forgiveness of sins." – Source: Luther's Catechism, The Sacrament of Holy Communion"

- The forgiveness obtained here through the sacrament is therefore one obtained through faith in Christ

### **Real Presence (Calvin's View)**

"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?" (I Corinthians 10: 16)

- ...The breaking of bread is a symbol; it is not the thing itself. But, having admitted this, we shall nevertheless duly infer that by the showing of the symbol the thing itself is also shown. ...
- The godly ought by all means to keep this rule: whenever they see symbols appointed by the Lord, to think and be persuaded that the truth of the thing signified is surely present there. For why should the Lord put in your hand the symbol of His body, except to assure you of a true participation in it? But if it is true that a visible sign is given us to seal the gift of a thing invisible, when we have received the symbol of the body, let us no less surely trust that the body itself is also given to us
- To summarize: our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ in the same way that bread and wine keep and sustain physical life. For the analogy of the sign applies only if souls find their nourishment in Christ—which cannot happen unless Christ truly grows into one with us, and refreshes us by the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood.
- Even though it seems unbelievable that Christ's flesh, separated from us by such great distance, penetrates to us, so that it becomes our food, let us remember how far the secret power of the Holy Spirit towers above all our senses, and how foolish it is to wish to measure His immeasurableness by our measure. What, then our mind does not comprehend, let faith conceive: that the Spirit truly unites things separated in space.
- Now, that sacred partaking of His flesh and blood, by which Christ pours His life into us, as if it penetrated into our bones and marrow, He also testifies and seals in the Supper—not by presenting a vain and empty sign, but by manifesting there the effectiveness of His Spirit to fulfil what He promises. And truly He offers and shows the reality there signified to all who sit at that spiritual banquet, although it is received with benefit by believers alone, who accept such great generosity with true faith and gratefulness of heart.

Source: [THEOLOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER](#) Excerpted from John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.17.1–5, 7–11 (trans. John McNeill) - Pilgrim Covenant - Reformed Church in Singapore ([pilgrim-covenant.com](http://pilgrim-covenant.com))

[Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper by Keith Mathison \(ligonier.org\)](#)

## Westminster Standards – Chapter 29: Of the Lord's Supper

1. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his church, unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death; the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; and, to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other, as members of his mystical body.
2. In this sacrament, Christ is not offered up to his Father; nor any real sacrifice made at all, for remission of sins of the quick or dead; but only a commemoration of that one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all: and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God, for the same: so that the popish sacrifice of the mass (as they call it) is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of his elect.
3. The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to declare his word of institution to the people; to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but to none who are not then present in the congregation.
4. Private masses, or receiving this sacrament by a priest, or any other, alone; as likewise, the denial of the cup to the people, worshiping the elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about, for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use; are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.
5. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that, truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ; albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine, as they were before.
6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense, and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament, and hath been, and is, the cause of manifold superstitions; yea, of gross idolatries.
7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements, in this sacrament, do then also, inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally but spiritually, receive, and feed upon, Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.
8. Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament; yet, they receive not the thing signified thereby; but, by their unworthy coming thereunto, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to their own damnation. Wherefore, all ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with him, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table; and cannot, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto.