

PREFACE

TWO considerations prompt this essay. For one thing, the revived interest in the Reformation is reminding the modern Church of her goodly heritage. The ecumenical movement is finding that the theology of the great reformers possessed a vitality and strength too often obscured in the later systems. It is heartening to see that Calvin studies are beginning to match the already impressive Luther renaissance. Yet it seems high time that more attention be given to Calvin's understanding of the work of Christ, for Christology is always the measure of any theology. The present essay is a modest effort in this direction.

Moreover, an essay in historical theology has more than academic interest, for a journey into the past is also a journey through the present. The meaning of revelation continues to hold the attention of contemporary theological debate, and the meaning of Christ is more than ever our urgent concern. In what sense is Jesus the Word of God? The older theology used to arrange its beliefs about Christ under the headings, *de persona* and *de officiis*, and sought formulas to bring these two into living unity. Christian preaching and reflection still have the same obligation to comprehend the meaning of the Gospel. Accordingly, to examine critically and appreciatively a formula of the past may shed some light upon to-day's pilgrimage of faith.

As to text, the standard edition for any study of Calvin is the *Calvini Opera*, which comprise fifty-nine volumes of the *Corpus Reformatorum*. The volume numbers cited below refer to the *Calvini Opera*, and not to the full *Corpus*, of which they form volumes 29-87. I have used the English translation of the commentaries, edited by the Calvin Translation Society, and lately reprinted by the Wm. B. Eerdmans Company. For the definitive 1559 edition of the *Institutes* I have used Allen's translation. For the most part, I have gone to the *Calvini Opera* for the sermons and homilies, as well as for the earlier editions of the *Institutes* and the other doctrinal works. Some of the Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright 1946 and 1952. Two indicated quotations are taken with permission from *The Bible: A New Translation* by James Moffatt, copyright 1922, 1935, and 1950 by Harper & Brothers.

This study has grown out of an interest in Calvin and Christology which was first awakened during graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary. It is fitting to express my gratitude to Professor Josef Hromadka (now of Prague) and to Professor Otto Piper for helpful insights that have remained with me.

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