

John Calvin – *Verbi Divini Minister*

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Abstract

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*Ministering the Word of God was a first priority for John Calvin. Through researching his frequent references to the ministry in his sermons and Bible commentaries, it was possible to arrive at a better understanding of his views on the office of pastor and teacher (**pastor et doctor**). Although the ministry is no **imperium**, the people of God should honour the servants of Christ on the ground of the dignity of their Master. The ministry is a servitude, but not without authority, so that by it the glory of God may excel among his people and in the world. This is also the ultimate goal of the minister's preaching, and to this end it should be clear and to the point. This article particularly pursues Calvin's views on the requirements for a sound proclamation of the Gospel. It is argued that Calvin's particular consideration of the broader context of a biblical passage in his exegesis points to the fact that he had already established the sound hermeneutic rule of ascertaining the intention of the author and the understanding of the first readers to get to the true meaning. Thus, in his preaching the application of Biblical truths was topical and to the point.*

1. Introduction

Many scholars have been fascinated by the captivating history of John Calvin's ministry. Accordingly much has been written by way of biographical material on this remarkable man.

In this article on Calvin as minister of die divine Word, I will rather embark on an examination of his views on ministry as such, which was inevitably reflected in his own life and position. Nearing the end of this earthly life – barely a month before his death – he could state unequivocally that according to the grace God had granted him, he had endeavoured to teach the divine Word soundly in preaching and writing and always to give a true exposition of Holy Scripture (Potgieter, 1982). This was indeed his basic philosophy for the ministry – both for his own and for that of others.

Incidentally, it remains a point of dispute among scholars whether Calvin was ever officially ordained to the ministry of the Church (Armstrong, 1991:158), but there can be no doubt that he became pastor to the French refugees in Strasbourg (Latourette, 1954:757) and was since 1541 accepted as such in Geneva, where he also regularly received his stipend as minister (Doumergue, 1907:341). Theodore Beza called Viret, Calvin and Farel the triumvirate in the ministry of the Gospel (Doumergue, 1904:158).

We come to know him as servant of the Lord particularly from his sermons and from his commentaries. Here it is not the learned Calvin – intellectual giant that he was – but the pastor and minister of the Word that is exposed. This is also where he opens the very depths of his heart to us and reveals his true frame of mind (cf. Biesterveld, 1897:35). Ministering the Word of God always remained a first priority for him. This is amply illustrated by the fact that in spite of a very demanding schedule in Geneva, he delivered no less than four thousand sermons! There were periods when he even preached on every day of the week (Van der Walt, 1986:326).

2. A special office

To Calvin's mind God gave a very special place in the establishing of his church to the pastor and teacher¹ (that is the minister of the Word). Referring to Ephesians 4:10-13 he states in his *Institutes* that we see "that God, who might perfect his people in a moment, chooses not to bring them to manhood in any other way than by the education of the Church. We see the mode of it being expressed; the preaching of celestial doctrine is committed to pastors" (*Inst.* IV.1.5).² In the same chapter he also says that "among the many noble endowments with which God has adorned the human race, one of the most remarkable is, that he deigns to consecrate the mouths and tongues of men to his service, making his own voice to be heard in them" (cf. *Summa doctrinae de ministerio verbi et sacramentorum*, CR XXXII p. 773 f.f.).

Clearly it is the will of God to make use of humankind as his servants in proclaiming the Gospel. Indeed, Calvin sees the ministry as servitude.

1 Calvin frequently uses the combination *pastor et doctor*. These offices could be exercised by one person, although the task of the pastor runs wider than that of the teacher (cf. Van der Walt, 1986: 333).

2 Unless stated otherwise, all English quotations from Calvin's *Institutes* in this article are taken from the edition of The Calvin Translation Society (instituted in May 1843), translated by Henry Beveridge; see Calvin (1846).

Pastors are not only servants of God, but also servants of mankind. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians

... all pastors of the Church are admonished as to their state and condition, for by whatever title of honour they may be distinguished, they are nothing more than the servants of believers, and unquestionably they cannot serve Christ, without serving his Church at the same time ... Hence it is the part of a good pastor, not merely to keep aloof from the desire of domineering, but to regard it as the highest pitch of honour, at which he aspires – that he may serve the people of God (Calvin, *Comm. II Cor. 4:5*).³

3. Servitude and authority

The highest honour in the Church is not government (*imperium*), but service (*ministerium*). From his thorough study of Calvin, Goumaz rightly concludes that Calvin regarded all offices in the Church as equal (Goumaz, 1964:17). A minister elected to be the moderator or chairman (*un gouverneur ou superintendant*) of an assembly of pastors and teachers, does not enjoy a position above the others (*Comm. Titus 1:7*). Those who occupy places of honour in the Church, should conduct themselves as the servants of others (*Comm. Matt. 23:11*). Indeed, real honour is that which God himself confers on us, and chiefly on pastors and teachers, the responsibility of being his witnesses (*Comm. II Tim. 1:8*). This should encourage those serving in the ministry of the Church to fulfil their task with even greater diligence.

On the other hand, the people of God have the duty to esteem the servants of Christ. First of all they should honour them on the ground of the dignity of their Master, and then further on account of the dignity and excellence of their office. Calvin states categorically that they may not despise those “whom God has placed in so illustrious a station” (*Comm. II Cor. 4:5*). Even though the government of the Church should be exercised and administered solely by the Word of God, He uses the ministry of men to this end. It is quite remarkable that Calvin in this context says that God made the ministers of the Word, as it were, his substitutes (*quasi vicariam operam*). It should, however, be clear that this does not happen by transferring his right and honour to them; they are merely doing his own work by their lips. In this way, God comes to us; He employs men to be his ambassadors in the world and to be the interpreters of his secret will, indeed to represent his own person (*qui*

3 Unless stated otherwise, all English quotations from Calvin’s commentaries in this paper are taken from the editions of The Calvin Translation Society (instituted in May 1843), printed by T. Constable, Edinburgh; see Calvin (1843-).

personam denique suam repraesentent) (*Inst.* IV.3.1). We should, however, know that it is no small matter to be a representative of the Son of God, in discharging an office of such magnitude, the object of which is to erect and extend the kingdom of God, to procure the salvation of souls which the Lord himself has purchased with his own blood, and to govern the Church, which is God's inheritance (*Comm.* I Tim 3:1).

In a letter to the Church in Geneva written from Strasbourg on the 25th June 1539 Calvin also addressed himself to this issue:

... especially, I ask you to weigh maturely, having put aside all respect of persons, of what honour the Lord accounts them worthy, and what grace he has committed to those whom He has appointed in His own Church as pastors and ministers of the Word. For He not only commands us to render a willing obedience, with fear and trembling, to the Word while it is proclaimed to us; but also commands that the ministers of the Word are to be treated with honour and reverence, as being clothed with the authority of His ambassadors, whom He would have to be acknowledged even as His own angels and messengers (*CR* vol. L p. 353).

Thus, even though the ministry is a servitude, it is not without authority. But its authority is not to be found in the person of the minister, but rather in the function which the minister fulfils (*Armstrong*, 1991:162). One should indeed clearly distinguish between the person of the minister and the service of the Word in which he officiates. The authority of the ministry is derived from the Word of God. The Word of God opens His kingdom for people. The same Word also shuts it for those who reject God's offer of salvation. In this way the servant of the Lord administers with authority the keys to eternal life. The ministers of the Gospel are "porters" of the kingdom of heaven, and they are vested with a power of binding and loosing, which is ratified in heaven.⁴ There is no other way in which the gate of life is opened to us than by the word of God, and hence it follows that the key is placed, as it were, in the hands of the ministers of the Word (*Comm.* Matt. 16:19).

Here, according to Calvin,

... is the supreme power, with which pastors of the Church, by whatever name they are called, should be invested, namely, to dare all boldly for the word of God, compelling all the virtue, glory, wisdom, and rank of the world to yield and obey its majesty; to command all from the highest to the lowest, trusting to its power to build up the house of Christ and overthrow the house of Satan; to feed the sheep and chase away the

4 "Laquelle est receuë et advouee és cieux" (*Comm.* Matt. 16:19).

wolves; to instruct and exhort the docile, to accuse, rebuke, and subdue the rebellious and petulant, bind and loose; in fine, if need be to fire and fulminate, but all in the Word of God (*Inst.* IV.8.9).

Under no circumstances ever should the pastor think lightly of his ministry. He is the interpreter of the Word among the people of God.

4. Requisites for the ministry

Two things are requisite for a pastor and teacher of the Church: he must be *called* by God to that office, and he must faithfully employ himself in the discharge of its duties (*Comm.* I Cor. 1:1). Therefore he must to a large extent abandon his own personal interests in favour of the service of the Lord. In his commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, Calvin deals with this at length:

For you must give up your own right if you would discharge your duty: a regard to your own interest must not be put in preference to Christ's glory, or even placed upon a level with it. Whithersoever Christ calls you, you must go promptly, leaving off all other things. Your calling ought to be regarded by you in such a way that you shall turn away all your powers of perception from everything that would impede you. It might be in your power to live elsewhere in greater opulence, but God has bound you to the Church, which affords you but a very moderate sustenance: you might elsewhere have more honour, but God has assigned you a situation, in which you live in a humble style: you might have elsewhere a more salubrious sky, or a more delightful region, but it is here that your station is appointed. You might wish to have to do with a more humane people: you feel offended with their ingratitude, or barbarity, or pride; in short, you have no sympathy with the disposition or the manners of the nation in which you are, but you struggle with yourself, and do violence in a manner to opposing inclinations, that you may keep by the trade you have got; for you are not free, or at your own disposal. In fine, forget yourself, if you would serve God (*Comm.* Phil. 2:21).

Thus Calvin also warns those in the ministry against an eager desire to acquire wealth, which can have a detrimental effect on their office (*Comm.* I Tim. 6:9). On the contrary, they should use their gifts and talents to benefit the Church of the Lord (*Comm.* I Tim. 4:14).

Above all it will be the pastor's task to preach the Gospel. In this he should constantly be aware of temptations lurking around him, such as to easily yield to opposition or to seek apologies for laziness. He may not devote himself to the office of teaching "merely at his own times and according to his own convenience, but that, shrinking neither from toils nor from annoyances, he may exercise his faculties to the utmost"

(*Comm.* II Tim. 4:2; cf. Acts 20:20). At the same time the servant of God should be diligent in the pastoral care of the people of God: visiting the sick and needy; admonishing those living in sin (cf. CR XXXVIII: 45. *Projet d'un ordre de visitation des eglises de la campagne, 11 Janvier 1546*).

The true pastor should flee from the temptation to please men rather than God.

Let us know, therefore, that true ministers of the gospel ought to make it their aim to devote to God their endeavours, and to do it from the heart, not from any outward regard to the world, but because conscience tells them that it is right and proper. Thus it will be secured that they will not make it their aim to *please men*, that is, that they will not act under the influence of ambition, with a view to the favour of men (*Comm.* I Thess. 1:4)

Furthermore the servant of God should be someone of irreproachable character and of sound integrity. "The preachers of the Gospel have also their courtesy and their pleasing manner, but joined with honesty, so that they neither soothe men with vain praises, nor flatter their vices" (*Comm.* Rom. 16:18). Of a minister upright stewardship is required – that is, to conduct himself with fidelity. The faithful minister is he who, with knowledge as well as uprightness (*avec science et bonne discretion, et d'un coeur droit*), discharges the office of a good and faithful minister (*Comm.* I Cor. 4:2). He should be honest, reliable, not flippant and setting a good example. In fact, he should be endowed with all the virtues and qualifications that the apostle mentions in the First Epistle to Timothy, chapter 3:1-7, and in Titus 1:7-9.

Calvin particularly states that

... the first thing required in a pastor is, that he [should] be well instructed in the knowledge of sound doctrine; the second is, that, with unwavering firmness of courage, he hold by the confession of it to the last; and third is, that he make his manner of teaching tend to edification, and [...] not, through motives of ambition, fly about through the subtleties of frivolous curiosity, but seek only the solid advantage of the Church (*Comm.* Titus 1:9).

At the same time Calvin admits that no man is perfect.

There will be no one found among men that is free from every vice, but it is one thing to be blemished with ordinary vices, which do not hurt the reputation, because they are found in men of the highest excellence, and another thing to have a disgraceful name, or to be stained with any baseness (*Comm.* I Tim. 2:2).

Calvin felt very strongly that not anyone should be admitted to the ministry of the Church. According to Calvin, training by means of Scripture and by devoted study is essential for the pastor. On the other hand, a pastor has to be called to this office by God and by the Church. There should indeed be a secret call of which every minister is conscious before God.⁵ But there is also the external and formal call, which relates to the public order of the Church (*Inst.* IV.3.11).

The Church, as the mother of the faithful (*Comm.* Gal. 4:26), had an enormous role in the preparation of those who wished to serve in this capacity. The Church also had to make sure that prior to entering the ministry, the candidate should be properly examined (CR XXXVIII: 17 – *Ordonnances ecclésiastiques 1541*). The examination had a twofold purpose: first to ascertain that the candidate had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and was capable of teaching it to the edification of the Church. For this purpose he also had to state publicly that he accepted the doctrine laid down by the Church.⁶

The second part of the examination concerned the life of the candidate: whether he maintained a high moral standard and was irreproachable in his conduct.

Only then, and after proper calling by the Church, could one be admitted to the ministry by the laying on of hands. This ceremony performed by the Church was of course not in itself conveying grace to the recipients. Grace from God was obtained for them by prayer, and not by virtue of the sign, “although the sign was not uselessly or unprofitably employed, but was a sure pledge of that grace which they received from God’s own hand” (*Comm.* II Tim 1:6). It is also interesting that Calvin saw it as a useful symbol by which the dignity of the ministry should be commended to the people and “he who is ordained be reminded that he is no longer his own, but is bound in service to God and the Church” (*Inst.* IV. 3.16).

5. Preaching the Word of God

Calvin’s view on the ministry of the Word of God in preaching will probably provide a very clear picture of Calvin as *Verbi Divini Minister*. What he wrote about this ministry, was most certainly also the way in which he performed his calling before God and the people. In fact, much

5 “*arcanam (vocationem) vero illam, cuius sibi quisque minister coram Deo conscius est ...*” (*Inst.* IV 3.11).

6 The prescribed vow for candidates is quoted in CR XXXVIII: 31.

can be learned about the pastor and teacher John Calvin from his own sermons.

For Calvin preaching the Word of God was by far the most important part of his ministry, not only on Sundays, but also throughout the week. To his mind nothing in the work of the Church exceeded in excellence and splendour the preaching of the Gospel, because the proclamation of the Word is the ministry of the Holy Spirit, uprightness and eternal life.⁷ Indeed, the preacher is dependent on the illumination of the Spirit: *sine Spiritus Sancti illuminatio, verbo nihil agitur* (*Inst.* III.2.23; cf. Potgieter, 1982).

His sermons were mostly in the form of a homily: an ongoing exposition or paraphrase of Scripture. He would start off with a particular book from the Bible and deal with it verse by verse and chapter by chapter, starting his next sermon where he ended with the previous one. To a certain extent this method of preaching resulted in a lack of synthesis and the development of a single line of thought in his sermons, although there was no want of theological guidelines for the congregation. Obviously, this method of preaching also had the result that he did not observe the church calendar as far as his sermons were concerned. For him it was of primary importance that the people of God should come to know Scripture. But never were his sermons a mere exegetical dissertation in an academic sense. Rather he was addressing the spiritual needs of his hearers through exposition and application of Scripture: teaching, admonition and consolation.

For Calvin it was essential that his hearers should understand what he was preaching about. Therefore his sermons were clear and straightforward. And because Calvin himself had a clear grasp on the truths that he wished to convey to the people, he could deliver it in an uncomplicated mode. On his death-bed he said that he could have been known as ingenious, had he been more intellectual in his orations, but he deliberately rejected that in favour of simple speech (Mühlhaupt, 1934:7).

To clarify the truth even better, he often made use of concrete examples from everyday life. He had a way of bringing home great truths very clearly by doing this. A few examples will be sufficient to illustrate this point. In his sermon on Deuteronomy 5:17 he said: “[God] did not simply create us to abstain from evil. Rocks and trees and other unconscious things achieve that quite well. Rather it is crucial for men to give and apply themselves to accomplishing good” (Farley, 1980:163). Of the Holy

7 “*quum sit administratio Spiritus et iustitiae et vitae aeternae*” (*Inst.* IV.3.3).

Spirit he says “that He is, as it were, the arm and the hand to distribute to us the graces of God” (Sermon Acts 1:4-5. CR LXXVI: CO vol. 48: 596-604). Referring to hypocrites in the church, he makes full use of illustrations:

They are people debauched and full of all impiety who have as much religion as dogs and swine. When they are finally examined on their life, it will be seen that they are full of disloyalty, that they have no more faith or loyalty in them than foxes; that they are full of treachery and perjuries ... they open a shop to grab with both hands so that they sell not only their faith but their honor before men; they open a fair and a market to lay themselves open to every evil (Sermon II Thess. 1:6-10. CR LXXX: CO vol. 52:225-238).

Pleading with the congregation to stand firm in their faith, he says: “God would not have us like to reeds shaken with every wind, or as children that may be led up and down with an apple ...” (Sermon II Tim. 1:13-14).

It is true that he occasionally made use of illustrations that will not be well accepted by present-day congregations, and which we will consider too harsh to use in contemporary sermons. He would for instance liken the filthy life of a sinner with a stinking leper, or he would ridicule his opponents by calling them names.⁸ We may, however, safely assume that in the time of the Reformation people were far less sensitive to that kind of utterances than in our current Western culture and that there were those among his hearers who could only be moved by such strong language (cf. Biesterveld, 1897:85).

The introduction to Calvin’s sermons was in most cases not elaborate. He would often merely refer to the previous sermon: yesterday we saw ... or: as we have seen this morning ... He would, however, occasionally refer to particular experiences that people may have in their personal life. For example in his sermon on II Timothy 3:8 and 9, he commences as follows: “Because it is a grievous and irksome thing to be thwarted when we would serve God, and go forward in his Word, they that are exercised in such bickerings have need of comfort ...” Further on he would then apply the experience of Moses in those verses by saying: “Therefore, let us take it patiently at this day, if we suffer the like ...”

8 This might have been the result of a certain vehemence in his character to which he himself refers in a letter to Bucer (Bavinck, 1909:24).

6. Style on the pulpit

Calvin was never in favour of a rhetorical style that had the intention, as it were, by special effect to try and convince the hearers of the grace of God. Neither by tricks nor by melodramatic ventures should the minister support his sermon. In this regard professor Peter aptly points out that Calvin stressed that a minister should not force himself to prominence on the pulpit. “He [Calvin] wishes to rescue the sermon from the subjectivity of the speaker” (Peter, 1986:248).

Commenting on Paul’s admonition to avoid profane talk and foolish arguments, Calvin holds that the apostle describes the high-sounding, verbose and bombastic style of those who, not content with the simplicity of the gospel, turn it into profane philosophy. “Where an ambitious desire to please prevails, there is no longer any strong desire of edification” (*Comm.* I Tim 6:20).

On the other hand, the pastor needs to give himself wholeheartedly to his ministry, and this frame of mind should be abundantly clear from his teaching from the pulpit. Calvin had appreciation for the skilful use of language, and he himself excelled in this regard. Writing to Lord Somerset in 1548, he said that the congregation should really be touched by the Word of God when it is preached⁹ (CR XXXIX: 77 f.f.). And indeed, those who listened to his sermons, knew immediately that they were personally addressed.¹⁰ But obviously he included himself: his frequent use of the pronouns *we* and *us* and *our*, is a clear indication of his solidarity with his people (cf. De Greef, 1988:198).

He often made use of questions by which his hearers were compelled to pay attention and to consider the issue at stake. This approach can be illustrated by taking examples from his sermon on the third commandment (Deuteronomy 5:11). Already in the introductory paragraph he would start off with two questions: “For what reason are we created in this world?” and “Why do we live here ... ?” He would also often make a statement and immediately follow it up with “Why?” or “What?” or “What is the actual case?” He would also use questions that force the hearers to examine themselves for sin: “When we think of God, how many vain thoughts crowd our minds?” or “Can we not see from this that we have never adequately worshipped God?” In this way he ensured keeping the minds of his hearers fixed on the sermon.

9 “*Pour estre touche au vif*”.

10 “*Sie sind angesprochen und einbesogen bei dem, was Calvin aufgrund des Wortes zu sagen hat*” (De Greef, 1988:198).

7. Essential ministry

Calvin mentions a number of reasons why the ministry of God's Word is not only beneficial, but essential for the people of God: it teaches them the revealed will of God; it is a correction of false doctrine; it strengthens the weak, comforts the bereaved, admonishes the transgressors of God's commandment, and will always for some be a call to conversion. The preacher must, however, always bear in mind that even when he teaches doctrine, his preaching must be useful, "so that everything that does not contribute to godliness shall be held in no estimation" (*Comm. Titus 3:9*). "The duty of a good teacher is rather to exhort to a holy life than to occupy the minds of men with useless questions" (*Comm. Titus 2:11*). Indeed, the remedy for driving away fables is to devote you to edification. By teaching sound doctrine man will be instructed in godliness; and it will not be enough to mention these things once or twice: the minister should continually be employed in this preaching. When Paul exhorts Titus to preach *sound* doctrine, he, according to Calvin, means *wholesome* doctrine, that which actually feeds the soul (*Comm. Titus 2:1*).

Calvin left no doubt about the source of the Church's preaching: nothing but Holy Scripture. This was the only norm for life and doctrine to be taught by those in office. In his commentary on I Thessalonians 2:13 Calvin states unambiguously that teachers (*les docteurs*) – that is ministers of the Word – are "admonished to beware of bringing forward anything but the pure Word of God, for if this was not allowable for Paul, it will not be so for any one in the present day". When he refers to Holy Scriptures as the one and only source, Calvin indeed meant the *whole* Bible. This is not only shown by his many sermons from both the Old and the New Testament, but also by his particular method of preaching texts and chapters in consecutive order.

8. Preaching Scripture

One must bear in mind that taking Scripture as the only source was a totally new approach brought forward by the Reformation. Thus Calvin moved away from the scholastic method of mostly quoting commentaries and the views of Church Fathers. He went back to the original Bible text in Greek and Hebrew and established the sound hermeneutic rule of ascertaining the intention of the author and the understanding of the first readers to get to the true meaning. In his exegesis he also took into consideration the broader context of any particular passage. Every book had to be dealt with according to its own character. He also followed the rule of *Sacra Scriptura sui ipsius interpret*. Thus he rejected the method of allegorical interpretation of Scriptures, saying that "Origen, and many

others along with him, have seized the occasion of torturing Scripture, in every possible manner, away from the true sense". He indeed expressed himself very strongly in this regard, calling the allegorical interpretation "a contrivance of Satan to undermine the authority of Scripture, and to take away from the reading of it the true advantage" (*Comm. Gal. 4:22*).

Calvin's preaching can indeed be portrayed as *Verbi Divini ministerium*. It was an exposition and application of Holy Scripture. Accordingly every sermon that he preached had a direct bearing on everyday life. Exactly because of his method of preaching homilies, the content of his sermons had a very broad scope.

Undoubtedly his primary objective was the ministry of reconciliation. Thus he wrote:

If we wish to show that we are faithful ministers of the Gospel, we must give our most earnest attention to this subject; for the chief point of difference between the gospel and heathen philosophy lies in this, that the Gospel makes the salvation of men to consist in the forgiveness of sins through free grace (*Comm. John 20:23*).

Reading his sermons reveals to the researcher a great deal about the pastor and teacher John Calvin. One cannot, for instance, but recognize a deep piety in his sermons on the book of Job: his respect for the mystery of God's sovereignty and providence is obvious.

When he touches on predestination he accepts the all-encompassing wisdom and grace of God. For those who come to faith, everything is from God. In this frame he also rejoices in his own salvation.

One remarkable characteristic of his sermons is the way in which he succeeded in bringing the doctrine of the church to bear on everyday life. In an exceptional way he could bring the Word of God to people so that they knew it meant something for them in the particular circumstances of their own situation. His application of Biblical truths were topical and to the point. In ethical issues he without fear condemned the vices of society and of individual conduct, calling people to obedience so that they may glorify God in every respect of their being. He never shrunk away from exposing heresy and false doctrine and from calling those who erred to repentance.

John Calvin was a great gift of God to his Church at a very crucial moment in the history of Christianity. His legacy of a whole library of tracts and treatises, of commentaries and dissertations, of deep theological discourses, of letters and sermons, will be there for posterity to read and to consider. But for the flock that he was called to guide and to comfort, he was above all the *verus Verbi Divini minister*.

I want to conclude with a very remarkable citation from an address by Karl Barth in Geneva some 64 years ago. He said:

Die Theologie kann bei allem ihr auferlegten wissenschaftlichen Ernst keine überflüssige, keine unpraktische, keine langweilige Sache werden, wenn sie bei Calvin in die Schule geht, wenn darum auch der Professor weiss, dass er nicht nur in zweiter, sondern immer in erster Linie ein *Verbi Divini minister* ist (Barth, 1936:5).

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Key concepts:

Biblically-based preaching

Calvin: views on the office of pastor and teacher

Reformed ministry

Kernbegrippe:

Calvyn: siening van die amp van herder en bedienaar

Reformatoriese bediening

Skrifprediking