

...THEY MAY BE ONE, AS WE ARE ONE

Note: The passages on page 2 and 3 were edited from Internet sources.

Commentary: Calvin

John Calvin, the Swiss reformer was actually a lawyer. He reacted violently to the excesses of the R. C. church of his time. Salvation was said to be easily obtainable by all, not by devotion but by indulgences based on the idea of The Treasury of Merit (page 2). The Treasury was considered to be a bank of Grace from which all Christians could draw "checks" upon Christ's and the saints' goodness. Critics have called this "salvation by dodges". Many will remember Luther's reaction to the sale of indulgences which spawned the German Reformation.

Calvin did Luther one better. His idea was that God determined before our birth that we would be saved or damned. The saved (the elect) were identified by their earthly prosperity; the damned by their poverty. Thus *rich* equaled *salvation* and *goodness*, *poor* equaled *damnation* and *wickedness*.²

It never seemed to faze Calvin and his followers that their idea of God was a Divine monster who capriciously determined our fate and gave salvation to "the elect" no matter what kind of life they led. They ignored Christ's desire (today's Gospel) that *we all be one* and that *the Father protect [us] from the evil one*

We deplore Calvin's terrible Theology, but Calvinist terminology is still with us. "Such a nice young man", we say, "and he comes from such a good family." We all know in that context "good" usually means "rich."

Easter Season Blessing

May almighty God, who has redeemed us and made us his children through the resurrection of his Son our Lord, bestow upon you the riches of his blessing. **AMEN.**

May God, who through the water of baptism has raised us from sin into newness of life, make you holy and worthy to be united with Christ for ever. **AMEN.**

May God, who has brought us out of bondage to sin into true and lasting freedom in the Redeemer, bring you to your eternal inheritance. **AMEN.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **AMEN.**

***There are two possible Gospel lessons for next Sunday.
Please prepare St. John 7:37-39a and 15:26-27, 16:4b-15.***

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Holy Trinity Window

Christ Church, Brunswick, Victoria, Australia

Christ Church is an example of "Italian Renaissance" architecture, although the *campanile* (bell tower) alone is of Romanesque design. Dedicated in 1857 and classified by the National Trust of Australia, The church has been a center of worship in Brunswick for nearly a century and a half. The Trinity window is a trefoil window of the Holy Trinity. This simple, elegant window beautifully encapsulates the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, that God is three in one. Moving in turn from each outer circle to the inner circle, The Latin reads "*The Father is God; The Son is God; The Holy Spirit is God*". Moving in turn around the outer circles, it reads "*The Father is not the Son; The Son is not the Holy Spirit; The Holy Spirit is not the Father*".

Today's Gospel: Saint John 17:6-19 [Year B, Easter 7]

NOTE: There are serious problems with today's Gospel translation. The boldfaced, underlined words reflect a Calvinist tradition that man is totally depraved. These words absolutely DO NOT APPEAR IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK. The Question is, (THE question of the Reformation) HOW CAN A PERSON BE SAVED?

² This despite Christ's warning us at least 6 times that *the last shall be first*.

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✠ JESUS PRAYED FOR DISCIPLES, SAYING, 'I HAVE MADE YOUR NAME KNOWN TO those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except **the one destined to be lost**, [Greek: *εἶ μιν ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας* *except the son of destruction*] so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth. [© NRSV]

Some Background reading from the Internet

(Today's brief commentary is on John Calvin. See page 4)

1) From: CHRISTIANS EVANGELIZING CATHOLICS

(This WEB site seethes with poisonous Anti-Roman Catholic invective, but - here, at least - is brief, accurate and clear.)

Treasury of Merit

A belief still supported by Roman Catholic doctrine.

John Calvin (1509-1564) deplored this non-Biblical concept.

[The Treasury of Merit is a Roman Catholic Doctrine that there are] superabundant merits of Christ and the saints from which the Church draws to confer spiritual blessings. The thought is that some saints had a

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surplus of merit (more than they needed for Heaven). Rather than lose these, God stored them so others who have need can draw from this superabundance.

Dr. Ludwig Ott, in FUNDAMENTALS OF CATHOLIC DOGMA, paged 441, states, "By an indulgence (*indulgentia*) is understood the extra-sacramental remission of the temporal punishment of sin remaining after the forgiveness of the guilt of sin. This remission is valid in the sight of God, and it is granted by the Church out of Her treasury of satisfaction. ... **The encyclical INDULGENTARIUM DOCTRINA, [of] Vatican II reiterated the Roman Catholic belief in the Treasury of Merit.**

2) From: THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM (Uncompromisingly pro - Calvinist)

Total Depravity (The most essential doctrine of John Calvin.)

[Total Depravity is the Calvinist doctrine that our] nature is so thoroughly corrupted by sin that it is incapable of producing anything good. There is nothing which the sinner can do which is pleasing in the sight of God. His heart is dead. Does not Solomon say, "Out of the heart are all the issues of life?" Prov. 4:23. Yet the heart, the source of all man's life, is dead. Man's mind is dead. It is so darkened by sin that man cannot with his mind know any spiritual good. He can, of course, in a formal sense understand the truth. When a wicked man reads the Scriptures, he can understand what words mean. He can understand the thoughts in these words. This is not the point. But his mind is so thoroughly darkened that every time he sees the truth concerning God he hates it and turns against it. He rebels against its clear teaching. He pushes it away from him. So true is this that Jesus tells Nicodemus in John 3:3: "Except a man be born again ¹, he cannot see the kingdom of God." His mind is so filled with the darkness of the lie that there is no room for the truth in it.

The same is true of man's will. The bondage of the will describes man's state precisely. His will is bound - bound by sin. Man cannot even will the good. The sinner does not, but also cannot will the good. This is his nature. He is dead. Can a dead man think? Can a dead man will? Can a dead man give evidence of life? The spiritually dead man is incapable of any spiritual good.

God chose *[the elect]* because it seemed good to Him to do it. It was His good pleasure. It was the good pleasure of His own eternal and unchangeable will. It was His because He had determined to glorify Himself in His own way through a people whom He would choose. **Christ died only for the elect, that is, for those whom God has chosen from eternity and whom He gave to Christ.**

¹ An accurate translation is *born from above*, that is something done by God, not by us.