

PRESBYTERIAN

John Calvin was born at Nayon, France, July 10, 1509. Through his study of the New Testament in the original, he gave up the Catholic Church, and became the founder of the doctrinal system known as Calvinism, which is usually associated with Presbyterianism, although there are a number of churches not Presbyterian in government that hold Calvinistic tenets. Presbyterianism, strictly speaking, refers only to that form of church government conducted under the reign of presbyters. The word Presbyterian comes from the Greek word, "presbuteros", which is translated elder, hence a Presbyterian Church is one governed by elders.

Calvin, however, never founded a distinct denomination, but he preached and put into practice the principles which underlie all Presbyterian Churches.

Presbyterianism became very powerful in Scotland under the leadership of John Knox. The first book of discipline was written in 1560, but it was not until 1592 that Parliament made Presbyterianism the established faith in Scotland. The Westminster Association, which was in session from July 1, 1643, to February 22, 1649, framed the Westminster Confession of faith, which became the doctrinal foundation of English and American Presbyterianism. Francis Makemie, who is called the "Father of American Presbyterianism", organized the Rehoboth Church in Maryland in 1684. Throughout the history of Presbyterianism there have been some seventeen distinct divisions.

PRESBYTERIANISM TEACHES:

- I. That "God has predestinated and fordoined some men and angels out of His free grace and love without any foresight of faith or works in man or perserevance in either of them, and others are foreordained to everlasting death and the number of either is so certain and definite that it can not be increased or diminished." (West-

minster Confession of Faith, Art. 3, 4, 5; Chap. 3; Art. 2, Chap. 10.)

THE BIBLE:

1. Salvation is for all who believe and obey the Gospel (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16; John 3: 16; Acts 2: 38, 39; II Thes. 2: 14; II Peter 1: 10; 3: 9).
- II. That "elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word." (Westminster Confession of Faith, Art. 3, Chap. 10.)

THE BIBLE:

1. Salvation is promised to those who believe and are baptized (Mark 16: 15, 16).
 2. Without faith we can not come to God (Rom. 10: 13-17; Heb. 11: 6).
- III. That faith alone will save.

THE BIBLE:

1. A man having faith without works can not be saved (James 2: 14).
2. Faith without works is dead (James 2: 17).
3. If faith alone can save, then all the devils would be saved, for they believe (James 2: 19).
NOTE: This would be universal salvation.
4. Faith is made perfect by works (James 2: 22).
5. We are not justified by faith only (James 2: 24).
6. Faith without works is dead as the body without the Spirit (James 2: 26).
7. Faith only gives us "power to become" sons of God (John 1: 12).

IV. That confession to the apostles' creed is necessary.

THE BIBLE:

1. The only creed of Christianity is a living personality, Christ (Matt. 16: 16).
2. The Church is built upon the confession of Christ as the Son of God (Matt. 16: 18).
3. This is the only confession required (Acts 8: 36-39; Rom. 10: 10; Matt. 10: 32, 33; I John 4: 2).

V. That there are three baptisms—sprinkling, pouring, immersion.

THE BIBLE:

1. The practice of the apostles and the early church was immersion.
2. Baptism is called:
 - (1.) A "birth" (John 3: 5).
 - (2.) A "going down into" and a "coming up out of" (Acts 8: 36-39).
 - (3.) A "washing" (Acts 22: 16).
 - (4.) A "burial" (Rom. 6: 4).
 - (5.) A "planting" (Rom. 6: 5).
 - (6.) A "resurrection" (Col. 2: 12).
 - (7.) A "cleansing" (Eph. 5: 26).
 - (8.) A "washing of the body" (Heb. 10: 22).
 - (9.) A "washing of regeneration" (Titus 3: 5).
 - (10.) There is ONE baptism (Eph. 4: 5).

VI. That the Church should practice infant baptism. (Vote of the Westminster Assembly, which was in session from July 1, 1643, to February 22, 1649. The vote was twenty-four to retain sprinkling and twenty-five to drop dipping.)

THE BIBLE:

1. Without faith it is impossible to come to God (Heb. 11: 6).
2. Faith cometh by hearing (Rom. 10: 17).
3. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16: 16).

NOTE: An infant can not comply with either requirement and therefore is not a proper subject of baptism.

4. There is not one mention of a child ever being baptized. The household converts were preached to, showing they were old enough to hear.

VII. That there is no salvation in a name.

THE BIBLE:

1. Adam and his wife wore the same name (Gen. 5: 2).
2. Adam was a figure of Christ (Rom. 5: 14).
3. Adam's wife is a figure of Christ's wife, the Church.
4. Adam and his wife wearing the same name pictures the fact that Christ and His wife, the Church, should wear the same name.
5. Prophetesied that Christ's servants should be given a new name when salvation went out from Jerusalem and the Gentiles saw His righteousness (Isa. 62: 1, 2).
6. Prophecy fulfilled.
 - (1.) Salvation went out from Jerusalem (Acts 2: 1-47; Luke 24: 47).
 - (2.) The Gentiles saw His righteousness (Acts 10: 1-48; Acts 11: 1).
 - (3.) When these two things came to pass the new name was given—Christian (Acts 11: 25, 26).
 - (4.) NOTE: "Christ-ian" means belonging to Christ.
7. Agrippa knew the followers of Christ wore that name (Acts 26: 28).
8. Peter commanded us to suffer in the name "Christian" (I Peter 4: 16).
9. We wear Christ's name in two worlds (Rev. 22: 4).

10. No salvation promised in any other name (Acts 4: 12).

VIII. That the Lord's Supper does not need to be observed weekly.

THE BIBLE:

1. Pictured in the Old Testament that as the priests ate the shewbread once each week, we should eat the Lord's Supper once a week (Lev. 24: 5-9).

NOTE: The things under the law were a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10: 1).

2. The early church continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread (Acts 2: 42).
3. The early church communed every first day (Acts 20: 7).

NOTE: Same phraseology as found in (I Cor. 16: 1, 2) and all understand that the collection is to be taken every week.

4. There is no life in us if we do not commune (John 6: 53).

NOTE: Calvin said: "And truly this custom, which enjoins communing once a year, is a most wicked contrivance of the devil, by whose instrumentality soever it may have been determined." (Institutes Book 4, Chap. 17.)

"It ought to have been far otherwise. Every week at least the table of the Lord should have been spread for Christian assemblies, and the promises declared by which in partaking of it, we might be spiritually fed." (Institutes Book 6, Chap. 18.)

IX. That the Holy Spirit acts directly upon the heart of a man to persuade him to obey the call of the Gospel.

"We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who moves everywhere upon the hearts of men to restrain them from evil and to

incite them to good, and whom the Father is ever willing to give unto all who ask Him. . . . and to persuade and enable them to obey the call of the Gospel." (Brief statement of the Reformed Faith for the better understanding of our doctrinal beliefs, General Assambly in Los Angeles, Cal., 1903.)

THE BIBLE:

1. Christ has promised to pray for the Holy Spirit to come to the obedient (John 14: 15-17).
2. The Holy Spirit is promised to those who repent and are baptized (Acts 2: 38).
The Holy Spirit does not act on the unbaptized to convert them, but comes to the baptized.
3. The Holy Spirit does not act upon the man to be converted, but selects preachers to preach and the field of labor each is to preach in (Acts 8: 26-39).

X. That we are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

THE BIBLE:

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit promised and given to the apostles (Matt. 3: 11; Acts 1: 1-5; 2: 1-4).
2. The House of Cornelius received the baptism of the Holy Spirit to prove to the Jew that the Gentile was an accepted people (Acts 10: 47, 11: 15).
3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit gives one power to perform ten kinds of miracles (Acts 2: 4-12; 5: 12-16; 9: 36-42; 20: 8-10).

NOTE: These were signs of an apostle (II Cor. 12: 12).

4. If a man claims to be baptized in the Holy Spirit today, then the world has a right to demand of him the working of miracles.
5. The baptism of the Holy Spirit came with a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues as of fire (Acts 2: 1-4).

NOTE: None receives such a manifestation today.

XI. That the ten commandments are binding on men today.

"We believe that the law of God, revealed in the ten commandments, and more clearly disclosed in the words of Christ, is forever established in truth and equity, so that no human work shall abide except it be built on this foundation."
(Art. 13, 1903 Assembly.)

THE BIBLE:

1. The law was given only to the Jew (Ex. 20: 1-17; Deut. 4: 8; 5: 1; Mal. 4: 4; Rom. 2: 14).
2. The ten commandments done away (II Cor. 3: 7-11).

NOTE: The part "written and engraven on stones" was the ten commandments.

3. The ten commandments are called a covenant (Ex. 34: 27, 28; Deut. 4: 12, 13; 9: 9; I Kings 8: 9, 21; II Chron. 5: 10; 6: 11).
4. The covenant of the ten commandments is abolished (Jer. 31: 31-34; Zech 11: 10-14; Heb. 8: 6-13; Heb. 9: 15-17).
5. The law was a curse and we are redeemed from the curse (Gal. 3: 13).
6. Those that are justified by the law are fallen from grace (Eph. 5: 4).

XII. That the Church should be governed by presbyters.

THE BIBLE:

1. The form of government in the beginning was congregational with elders and deacons of the local congregation (Acts 14: 23; Phil. 1: 1; I Tim. 3: 1-7).
2. There was a plurality of elders over the local congregation, but never an elder over a plurality of congregations (Phil. 1: 1; Titus 1: 5; Acts 14: 23).

3. Paul prophesied that the apostacy would arise among the elders, or bishops (Acts 20: 29, 30).
NOTE: The first departure from the primitive order was when an elder or bishop began to oversee more than one church, then a district. This finally produced a pope sitting at Rome claiming authority over the entire Church.
 4. Peter saw the danger of ambitious elders lording it over God's heritage (I Peter 5: 3).
-