

11 The Goal of Faith in John Calvin

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I. Preliminary Remarks

Before we go into an investigation of Calvin's teaching on "the goal of faith" (scopus fidei) : let us consider what is Calvin's general concern about "Christian religion."

Das *Wesen des Christentums* (in English, *What is Christianity?*) has been a classic subject which has been discussed again and again, particularly because this subject is the most confused topic since the time of Descartes, particularly in the Western theological thought since Immanuel Kant. The typical example may be seen in the work of : Rudwihc Feuerbach and Adolf Von Harnack. Actually all the Modern Western theologians have conceived their own "Christianity" since the time of Kant. Consequently what we see is so many kinds of Christianity as the number of theologians.

In contrast to this, one may point out Calvin has concentrated on the only one religion, i.e., the religion of "salvation by faith."

We can easily confirm this fact in Calvin's summary statement on the Book Three in the beginning of the Book Four of his Institutes :

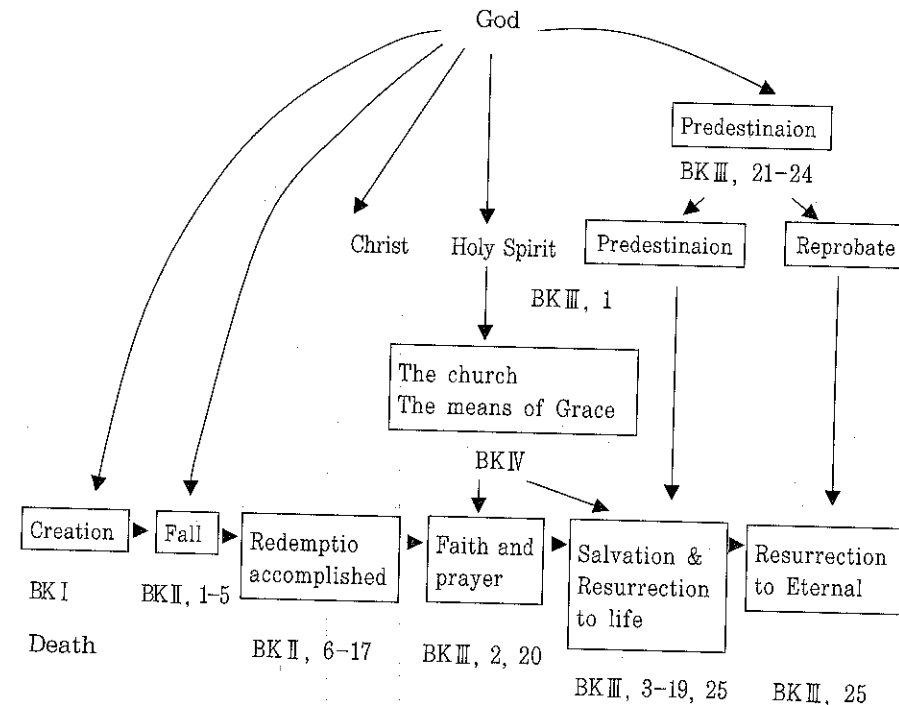
As explained in the previous book(BK III) it is by the faith in the gospel that Christ become ours and we are made partakers of the salvation and eternal blessedness brought by him.

In this short sentence we can see a sum of Christian religion :

1) It is the religion of "sola fide" as taught by the Reformers, that is, the religion of "faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ." 2) The purpose of the gospel preaching is to bring Christ to the believers that they may embrace by faith Christ and all his benefits. 3) Now the benefits which Christ brings to us is summarized as "salvation and eternal blessedness."

After all, Calvin's religion is nothing but religion of a sinner being saved from sin and received into eternal blessedness. Unfortunately, this truth of salvation has been neglected by the world of theology in general and often even by the conservatives. However, no one would deny that the happiness or misery of the whole mankind, both in the present life and in the life to come depends upon this vital truth.

The fact that Calvin's sole interest was concentrated on salvation of sinners is clearly seen not only in that introductory sentence of BK iv but also the structure of the whole Institutes of Christian Religion, which most eloquently explains the "salvation by faith" as the very central content of the whole Institutes.



This diagram shows that the fallen mankind come to salvation and eternal blessedness by faith and prayer through the church's ministry of the gospel. In short, this diagram cries out,

"Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved."

II. The Purpose of our Study on the Goal of Faith in John Calvin : To Confirm the Central Truth of Christian Religion

Then, why do we take up this topic : "the goal of faith in John Calvin" for our particular attention? It is because Calvin's doctrine on "faith" sets forth clearly that there is a "center" in Christian religion. Throughout the history Christian church did not indicate any particular center in our religion and only set forth systems of articles of faith, such as Apostolic Creed, Nicene Creed etc. and at the time of Reformation various classical symbols : Augusburg Confession, Helvetic Confession, etc. These systems of articles of faith set forth only the rule of faith which prevents heretical faith within Christian church. It was only in the liberal Christianity since the time of Immanuel Kant that each theology sets forth some particular kind of Christian teaching centered around some particular key concepts of truth, such as "moral conscience" in Kant, "God-conscience" in Schleiermacher, "the Word of God" in Karl Barth, etc. Therefore, we could easily distinguish these monistic Christian thoughts from the historic traditional religious teaching of pluralistic Christian truth.

This tendency of neglecting the central truth has been accelerated even more during the Seventeenth Century when the whole church has involved in the establishment of an orthodox Christianity, following the time of Reformation. And this orthodoxism remained in the historical Church particularly during the struggle to maintain Christian faith over against the liberalism. Therefore, we can see that (1) the liberal Christianity tends to set forth all kinds of centers apart from salvation, the real and the most important issue of Christian religion, (2) the orthodox Christianity tends to fail to set forth the true center

of Christian religion.

We may consider that the Eighteenth Century movement of the Great Awakening of faith was a kind of reaction against the false security of the orthodox Christianity as well as the Secularization of the Western Christian world under the influence of Renaissance secular culture. John Wesley was concerned with "one thing needful," throughout his life ministry : "salvation by faith." If we look back John Calvin's Christian religion from the same perspective, we can well conclude that John Wesley was the true successor of Calvin's teaching of Christian religion.

On the other hand the Bible itself sets forth the only one thing needful : that is, "the gospel." The Great Commission is the conclusion of the gospel history. "Preach the gospel to every creature." This good news of forgiveness of sins is the very central concern of the entire Bible. The apostle Paul considered himself, having been called and "separated unto the gospel of God"(Rom 1 : 1).

III. The Goal of Faith in John Calvin

John Calvin, in his long chapter on "faith" he tries to make it clear what faith has properly to look into.

But now we ought to examine what this faith ought to be like, through which those adopted by God as his children come to possess the Heavenly Kingdom, since it is certain that no mere opinion or even persuasion is capable of bringing so great a thing to pass(Inst. 3.2.1).

At the outset Calvin states clearly what the ultimate goal of faith is, that is "being adopted by God as his children and coming

to possess the Heavenly kingdom." Indeed this is the ultimate goal of believers. A sinner accepted as righteous through forgiveness of sins by the sacrifice of Christ comes to enjoy peace with God and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Then, in this pardoning love of God the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God. What a great thing this is that a sinner is changed into a child of God and come to inherit the Father's Kingdom! "It is certain that no mere opinion or persuasion is capable of bringing so great a thing to pass." Calvin carefully investigates into the true nature of faith. Here Calvin indicates that "miserable souls must be directed to a definite goal." This goal of faith must be such a kind by which such a great thing happen, that is, a sinner being adopted a son of God and coming into eternal life.

Calvin starts to investigate into this goal, i. e. *scopos fidei*, with the fact that the primary object of faith is to be God. "It is true that faith look to one God." But he immediately adds "To know Jesus Christ whom he has sent."

"Because the Father laid up with his only begotten Son all that he had to reveal himself in Christ," "Christ by communicating his Father's benefits, express the true image of his glory"(Heb. 1:3, Inst.1.2.1). At this point Calvin introduces Augustine's discussion of *scopos fidei* :

Augustine has finely spoken of this matter in discussing the goal of faith, he teaches that we must know our destination and the way to it(*quo sit eundem et qua*).

To which goal faith ought to go and through which way it ought to reach its goal. The conclusion is : "through Christ we believe in God"(I Pet. 1 : 21, Inst. 3.2.1).

With so much of introductory remarks of "faith," that it must

be rightly directed to its proper goal, if it can bring forth such a great event : adoption and entry into the glory, Calvin again introduces somehow full picture of the goal of faith, in polemic against Romish teaching of "implicit faith," that is, pious ignorance submitting your feeling obediently to the church. In answer to "such weaning down the whole force of faith," Calvin clearly sets forth the true nature of faith all at once.

Faith rests not on ignorance, but on knowledge. And this is, indeed, knowledge not only of God but of the divine will. we obtain salvation when we know that God is our merciful Father, because of reconciliation effected through Christ(II Cor. 5 : 18-19), and that Christ has been given to us as righteousness, sanctification, and life. By this knowledge, we obtain entry into the Kingdom of Heaven(Inst. 3.2.2).

Indeed, here, we have a full definition of Calvin's goal of faith : (*divinae erga nos benevolentiae cognitio*) knowledge of God's benevolence toward us.

Calvin does not deny the necessity of "implicit faith" even in believers. Particularly in case of Christ's disciples he admits "a true but implicate faith." However, he does not neglect to set forth the nature of faith in their implicit faith.

There was in them a true but implicit faith because they had reverently embrace Christ as their sole teacher. Then, taught by him, they were convinced he was the author of their salvation. And finally they believed he came from heaven that, through the Father's grace, he might gather his disciples thither(Inst. 3.2.4).

In this introductory remarks on the goal of faith and its nature we can clearly see that Calvin is never interested in any abstract discussion on faith itself, but his sole interest was in "the faith in the gospel that Christ becomes ours and we are made partakers of salvation and eternal blessedness brought by him."

As stated in the beginning faith looks to the only true God but through Christ. But, Calvin makes it clear that we can have "the true knowledge of Christ, if we receive him as he is offered by the Father, namely, clothed with his gospel."

For just as Christ has been appointed as the goal of faith(*scopos fidei*), so we cannot take the right road to him unless the gospel goes before(*Inst. 3.2.6*).

God is the only proper goal of faith, but only through Christ whom he has given. Therefore, faith ought to first of all properly look at Christ, as he has been appointed as "*scopos fidei*." However, faith need to be taught by the gospel, therefore, "the gospel needs to go before us." Calvin does not neglect "Moses and the Prophets" which have build up the faith of Israel. Consequently Calvin decide to proceed "from general to particular"(a *genre ad speciem*). Thus, he now draws attention of faith to the Scriptures in general.

The Word of God is now set forth as "the goal of faith"(*scopos fidei*).

Therefore if faith turns away even in the slightest degree from this goal(*ab hac scopo*) toward which it should aim, it does not keep its own nature, but becomes uncertain credulity and vague error of mind. The same Word is the basis whereby faith is supported and sustained; if it turns away from the Word, it falls. Therefore, take away the

Word and no faith will then remain(*Inst. 3.2.6*).

Even though a faith ought to look at the Word of God as the goal of faith, it must not stop there, but through the Word of God it must contemplate God himself. Therefore Calvin indicates the Scripture or the human ministry of the Word of God is like a mirror in which faith may contemplate God.

But we say that the Word itself, however it be imparted to us, is like a mirror in which faith may contemplate God Therefore, God always represents himself through his Word to those whom he wills to draw to himself(*Inst. 3.2.6*).

At this point Calvin already draw our attention to God's will of salvation than to God himself. Through his Word God reveals himself to us, but we must pay our attention to what God wills toward us.

In understanding faith it is not merely a question of knowing that God exists, but also of knowing what is his will toward us. For it is not much our concern to know who he is in himself, as what he wills to be toward us.

Thus, though Calvin started with "God through Christ" to be *scopos fidei*, but now God's will must be sought after by faith. And here again it is only through the Word of God as the primary goal of faith. However, not all the words of Scripture establish faith but we must seek in the Scripture the word of his good will toward us, that is, the word of God's mercy toward us in spite of our sinfulness, namely, that our salvation is God's concern.

Thus, surely we shall more closely approach the nature

of faith, for it is after we have learned that our salvation rests with God that we are attracted to seek him. This fact is confirmed for us when he declares that our salvation is his care and concern(Inst. 3.2.7).

Thus, in Calvin God's benevolence toward us is God's willing to save us, as Calvin says : "God declares that our salvation is his care and concern." Then, we come to faith in God earnestly seeking our salvation in him alone, as Calvin states : after we have learned that our salvation rests with God that we are attracted to seek him!

This faith in God's benevolence toward us is again strengthened by his "promise of grace" namely "the covenant of mercy."

Accordingly we need the promise of grace which can testify to us that the Father is merciful ; since we can approach him in no other way, and upon grace alone the heart of man can rest(Ibid.).

Here, Calvin introduces God's faithfulness in keeping his promise of mercy. Unless God's good will toward us is unchanging truth, our faith in his mercy will finally not stand. Therefore, Calvin indicates "the psalms commonly yoke these two, mercy and truth as if they were mutually connected"(Ps 89 : 14, 24, 92 : 2, 98 : 3, etc., Ibid.). This fact of indissoluble tie of his mercy and truth also must be witnessed by God himself. Yes, indeed where can we find surer pledge of "his mercy and truth" than in Christ. "But we have already seen that the sole pledge of his love is Christ, without whom the signs of hatred and wrath are everywhere evident"(Ibid.). Therefore, our faith in God's benevolence toward us is founded upon the truth of his promise of mercy and grace in Christ.

Now, we can have Calvin's full definition of faith, if the last clause of the definition of faith "both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit" is added. In order to introduce the necessity of "the revelation and the sealing of the Holy Spirit" for the strengthening of faith, Calvin introduces a very important truth, which we may call the Moravian-Wesleyan doctrine of "living faith." A living faith cannot be a dead faith which has no effect in the heart of man, but by it the believer may surely be justified in Christ and all doubt is excluded in the heart. Now the following statement of Calvin is saying the same truth.

Now, the knowledge of God's goodness will not be held very important unless it makes us rely on that goodness. Consequently, understanding mixed with doubt is to be excluded, as it is not in firm agreement, but in conflict, with itself(Inst. 3.2.7).

Here, Calvin is saying that : having faith in God's good will toward us, still if that faith does not make us to rely truly upon God's goodness, that faith does not have much power. In other word our faith, looking at "God's good will toward us" with confidence on his mercy and salvation, ought to make us truly to rely upon God for our salvation. In this "living faith" doubt ought be excluded. The question is how corrupt human hearts can have such a living faith? Calvin answers : "our minds must be otherwise illumined and our hearts strengthened."

Yet far indeed is the mind of man, blind and darkened as it is, from penetrating and attaining even to perception of the will of God! And the heart, too, wavering as it is in perpetual hesitation, is far from resting secure in that

conviction! Therefore, our mind must be otherwise illumined and our heart strengthened that the Word of God may obtain full faith among us(Ibid.).

Calvin concludes this part, that our minds need to be illumined and our hearts need to be sealed by the Holy Spirit. Calvin now gives a full definitions of faith :

Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit(Ibid.).

In a sense this is a Trinitarian definition of faith. (1) Faith is nothing but faith in God that he is good to us. Actual contents of this is that he will save us through forgiveness of sins and sanctification for the entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. (2) However, this faith in God's benevolence toward us is founded upon the promise of mercy and truth in Christ. Unless God testified his promise of mercy in Christ in whom God accepts and loves us, the certainty of our faith shall not be established. (3) This faith ought to be revealed in our minds and sealed on our hearts by the Holy Spirit so that our souls may truly rely upon God's benevolence with confidence and our lives may not go astray from the guidance of the Spirit.

Therefore, all these parts of the definition of faith ought to be the goal of faith : not only God's benevolence, but also the promise of grace and also the revelation and sealing of the Holy Spirit.

In section 28, he indicates that faith ought to look to "the divine benevolence."

Now, in the divine benevolence which faith is said to look to ; we understand the possession of salvation and eternal life is obtained(Inst. 3.2.28).

In section 29, he indicates that "the freely given promise of God is" the proper goal of faith.

Therefore, when we say that faith may rest upon a freely given promise, we do not deny that believers embrace and grasp the Word of God in every respect : but we point out the promise of mercy as the proper goal of faith(Inst. 3.2.29).

If faith has to look to God's good will to adopt us as his children and give us the eternal inheritance, and again look to his promise of mercy in Christ considering our misery, naturally faith must also look to the Holy Spirit's revealing to our minds and sealing upon our hearts to knowledge of God's good will toward us.

It is harder for the heart to be furnished with assurance than for the mind to be endowed with thought. The Spirit accordingly serves as a seal, to seal up in our hearts those very promises the certainty of which it has previously impressed upon our minds ; and takes the place of a guarantee to confirm and establish them(Inst. 3.2.26).

Thus, Calvin directs our faith to every part of the definition of faith as its goal, because each part of the definition contributes to establish firmly our faith to obtain salvation and eternal inheritance. However, these objects of faith : God through Christ, the Word of God, the promise of mercy in Christ, and the Holy Spirit are organically related to each other and concentrate upon

one goal of faith, that is "God's benevolence toward us." Therefore, the proper object of faith is "God's benevolence toward us" and other remaining parts are only to confirm our faith and give assurance to it and does not add any new contents of our salvation.

In a sense the goal of faith may be extended to all knowledge of faith(notitia fidei). In fact all the theological activity may be considered to be the cognitive activity of faith. However, Calvin distinguishes clearly "two forms of faith," which we may call "fides quae creditur" and "fides qua creditur." The former one Calvin says is, "unworthy to be called 'faith,'" because it is in common with demons(Inst. 1st. ed. tr. Battles, p. 42). Calvin draws the line between "assurance"(certitudo) and "comprehension"(apprehensio) in relation to "the knowledge of faith."

The knowledge of faith consists in assurance rather than in comprehension. Fidei notitiam certitudine magis quam apprehensione contineri(Inst. 3.2.14).

In the first edition of his Institutes Calvin already makes it clear "the nature of faith" to be such a one which makes us "acknowledging God and Christ" "as our God and Christ Savior", so that "we attain through him forgiveness of sins and sanctification, so also salvation has been given, in order that we may be led into God's Kingdom." He concludes that "this is the goal set for us in his scripture ; that is the target he sets"(Ibid.).

IV. Nature of Faith and the Goal of Faith

In exposition on faith, Calvin was not interested in analysis

of what faith is in its essence, but the nature of faith in relation to our salvation. The first statement on faith in the beginning of his long chapter on faith indicates this fact very clearly, as I have quoted in the beginning.

Now we ought to examine what this faith ought to be like, through which those adopted by God as his children come to possess the Heavenly Kingdom(Inst. 3.2.1).

In Calvin by "the nature of faith" he meant throughout his investigation the faith by which the great event of salvation occurs in the believers. Calvin continues to say :

It is certain that no mere opinion or persuasion is capable of bringing so great a thing to pass. And we must scrutinize and investigate the true character of faith with great care and zeal because many are dangerously deluded today in this respect(Ibid.).

Here "many are dangerously deluded" means to "lead miserable souls astray rather than direct them to a definite goal." At this point we can already see the relation between "the nature of faith" and "the goal of faith." In order that faith may obtain a proper nature, "capable of bringing so great a thing to pass," faith must be directed to a proper goal. Therefore we can conclude that as long as faith look to these points correctly as expounded above, namely each part of the definition of faith, the faith would certainly bring such a great thing to pass, namely being adopted as children of God coming to possess the eternal glory.

This direction of investigation on faith was most clearly shown already in his First Edition. Calvin already uses the term "the nature of faith, It now remains for us to learn what the nature

of faith ought to be”(Battles tr. p. 42). Calvin distinguish “two forms of the faith.” One is what latter dogmatician called “fides histerica” or “fides quae creditur.” But Calvin think that “such faith is of no importance : thus it is unworthy to be called ‘faith’ ; if anyone boast of it, let him realize he has it in common with demons.” In Calvin the true faith is :

The other is the faith whereby we not only believe that God and Christ are, but also believe in God and Christ, truly acknowledging Him as our God and Christ as our Savior. Now this is not only to adjudge true all that has been written or is said of God and Christ : but to put all hope and trust in one God and Christ, and to be so strengthen by this thought, that we have no doubt about God’s good will toward us(Ibid. p. 42).

We see that Calvin already in the first edition uses the expression “no doubt about God’s good will toward us” as the definition of the true faith. He continues :

Consequently, we have been persuaded that whatever we need, either for the use of the soul or of the body, he will give us ; we await with assurance whatever the Scripture promise concerning him ; we do not doubt Jesus is our Christ, that is, Savior. But as we attain through him forgiveness of sins and sanctification, so also salvation has been given, in order that we may at last be led into God’s Kingdom, which will be revealed on the last day. And this is indeed the head and almost the sum of all those things which the Lord by his Word offers and promises us. This is the goal set for us in his scripture ; this the target he sets(Ibid. p. 43).

Here, already in his first edition we can see the a full picture of “the true nature of faith” and it is set forth as the God given goal or target of faith. We see here the salvation through “forgiveness of sins and sanctification” and the final inheritance “into God’s Kingdom” is set forth as the goal of faith. All the more we can confirm that Calvin was the very source of the latter Wesleyan type of evangelicalism : in his emphasis on confessing God as our God and Christ our Savior : “acknowledging him as our God and Christ as our Savior” and “we do not doubt Jesus is our Christ, that is, Savior.”

Calvin sets forth “the nature of faith” as “that special mark which separates believers from unbelievers”(Inst. 3.2.30). He says : “we seek a faith that distinguish the children of God from the wicked, and believers from unbelievers”(Ibid.). He explain the matter a little more concretely as follows :

But now we ask, of what sort is that faith which distinguishes the children of God from unbelievers, by which we call upon God as Father, by which we cross over from death into life, and by which Christ, eternal salvation and life, dwells in us? I believe that I have briefly and clearly explained the force and nature of faith(Inst. 3.2.13).

As this special mark which separate believer from unbelievers, Calvin gives two points :

first, that faith does not stand firm until a man attains to the freely given promise ; second, that it does not reconcile us to God at all unless it join us to Christ(Inst. 3.2.30).

The first point is that our faith ought to firmly rely upon God’s promise of mercy. However, there is no salvation unless our faith

in Christ must be such a one as it engrafts us in the body of Christ.

Calvin explains further this “engrafting,” when he refutes “half papists” “teaching of unbelief and good hope, alternately reigning in the mind” through “alternately contemplating Christ and turning back to the self.” He indicates that it is “as if we ought to think of Christ, standing afar off and not rather dwelling in us” he makes it clear the nature of “engrafting.” This engrafting, however, make us also to partecipe in all his benefits :

But since Christ has been so imparted to you with all his benefits that all his things are made yours, that you are made a member of him, indeed one with him, his righteousness overwhelms your sins ; his salvation wipes out your condemnation ; with his worthiness he intercedes that your unworthiness may not come before God’s sight(Inst. 3.2.24).

Though these marks of true faith indeed clearly differentiates between believers and unbelievers, yet often “shadow of faith”(Inst. 3.2.8-13) or “weak faith mixed with doubt”(Inst. 3.2.17-21) require even a clearer mark engraved in our very heart by the Holy Spirit. Calvin everywhere appeals for the final demarcation of believer, to the Spirit of adoption. Refuting “worthless distinction of formed and unformed faith of the schools,” Calvin indicates “the Holy Spirit, by illumining our hearts unto faith, is the witness to us of our adoption!”(Inst. 3.2.8) Again, in order to distinguish “the true faith from a transitory faith”, Calvin indicates : “only in the elect does that confidence flourish which Paul extols, that they loudly proclaim Abba Father(Gal. 4 : 6, Rom. 8 : 15).” Again, As believers are regenerated by God with incorruptible seed forever, Calvin indicates, “in order

that the seed of life sown in their hearts may never perish, he firmly seal the gift of his adoption in them that it may be steady and sure”(Inst. 3.2.11). Again, to refute scholastic objection to the assurance of faith in God’s good will toward us, Calvin appeals again to the witness of the Holy Spirit to our spirit that we are children of God(Inst. 3.2.39). In short, our faith in God’s good will toward us must be founded upon his promise of mercy. However, his mercy culminates when he testifies by his Spirit that we are his children, moving our heart to cry aloud to him : “Abba Father!” Now, the relationship between “the goal of faith” and “the nature of faith” is, as already indicated in the beginning of this section is that “the goal of faith” is to be such one as which may cause “faith” to obtain a proper nature, capable of bringing so great a thing to pass.

However, Calvin’s explanation of “the nature of faith,” seen above, does not exactly correspond to his explanation of “the goal of faith,” if we observe it only in a vacant speculative way. Calvin’s main concern of this chapter on “faith” was not to present a full picture of salvation, corresponding to “the true nature of faith,” but to establish our faith firm and certain(firaman certanque cognitionem), so that we may obtain assurance of God’s good will toward us, sealed on our hearts. He spends more than the Two third of this long chapter for this one purpose : to led our faith overcome “fear and doubt.” Therefore, in reality(res ipsa) in Calvin’s heart and mind, the fear of God and assurance of his salvation, that is, forgiveness of sins and adoption and hope of the entry into his Kingdom are overruling at every moments. The best example of this may be seen in his “some preliminary remarks” which he introduces in relation to refuting that worthless distinction between formed and unformed faith(Inst. 3.2.8). There he reveals the most of the fundamental contents of the saving faith : i.e. “the fear of God,” “the sense of piety,” “the

Holy Spirit's illumining our heart "unto faith," "the witness to us of our adoption", again "the Holy Spirit is witness of his adoption," "the beginning of believing already containing within itself the reconciliation whereby man approaches God," quoting Rom 10 : 10 "with the heart a man believes unto righteousness."

Therefore, we can conclude that Calvin has well indicated the most important point that "our faith need to be directed to the only one goal : that is, God's good will toward us," and only in that faith all the true nature of faith shall be manifested.

Before we conclude, only as a reference, we can confirm that Calvin, even the young Calvin was the very sources of the important thought of "the nature of faith" which played such a key role in the Moravians and consequently also in John Wesley. For this reference, following quotation from Wesley's Journal concerning "the nature of faith" :

Sat. 22, April 1738, — I met Peter B hler once more. I had now no objection to what he said of the nature of faith ; namely, that is ① a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God, ② Neither could I deny either happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. ③ "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

V. Conclusion :

We may conclude our investigation on Calvin's view of "the goal of faith" and "the nature of faith" as follows :

1) Calvin taught us in his teaching on "the goal of faith" that

there is a center

in our faith, that is, God's good will toward us.

2) The true nature of faith is such faith by which we are made true believers :

all our sins forgiven and being regenerated and adopted as God's children and come to possess the Kingdom of Heaven, namely we are made partakers in the salvation and eternal blessed brought by Christ.

Therefore, the truth which Calvin teaches is, that there is only one truth of salvation which we can attain by our true faith properly directed to its goal : God's good will toward us ; founded upon the truth of his promise of mercy in Christ ; revealed in our mind and sealed in our heart by the Holy Spirit.¹⁾

1. The 8th Asian Congress on Calvin Research Jan. 22(Tue.)-24(Thu.), Jan. 20, 2002, Han Chul-Ha(ACTS).