

The Christian Life

An Introduction to Calvin's *Institutes*

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May 8 - June 12, 2022



Summary of Last Week

- The Christian is to be holy as his Father in heaven is holy.
- Holiness means keeping God's holy law, summarized as loving God and loving others.
- Scripture gives the model for pursuing holiness and law-keeping: self-denial.
 - Self-denial helps us love others.
 - Self-denial helps us love God.
 - Part of loving God is trusting in him through adversity.

Class 4 | Bearing Our Cross Is a Part of Self-Denial

Christian Life ch. 3 | *Institutes* bk. 3, ch. 8

- Christ Followers Will Bear Their Cross as Christ Bore His (§ 1)
- Cross Bearing Produces Christians (§ 2-6)
- Cross Bearing Helps Make Sense of Suffering (§ 7-11)

**Christ Followers Will Bear Their
Cross as Christ Bore His (§ 1)**

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1. Christ's cross and ours.

“His life was nothing other than a kind of perpetual cross...Why, then, would we exempt ourselves from the same situation to which Christ our head was subjected—particularly since He was subjected to suffering for our sake to provide for us a pattern of patience in Himself?”

Cross Bearing Produces
Christians (§ 2-6)

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2. Cross bearing humbles us and makes us rely on God.
3. Cross bearing demonstrates God's faithfulness.
4. Cross bearing trains us in endurance and obedience.
5. Cross bearing is the Father's medicine.
6. Cross bearing is the Father's discipline.

Cross Bearing Helps Make Sense
of Suffering (§ 7-11)

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7. Suffering for righteousness' sake.
8. Real suffering is always accompanied by real comfort.
9. The Christian, like his master, gives expression to his pain and sorrow.
10. When in suffering, remember: the Lord has willed it.

Calvin's Cross

- “Indeed, adverse circumstances will keep their bitterness, and we will feel their bite.”
- “When afflicted by illness, we will groan and toss and long for health.”
- “When pursued by poverty, we will feel the stings of sadness and anxiety.”
- “We will bear the weight of sorrow at dishonor, contempt, and injustice.”
- “When loved ones die, we will naturally weep.”
- **“But this will always be our conclusion: Nevertheless, the Lord has willed it. Therefore, let us follow His will.”**

Cross Bearing Helps Make Sense of Suffering (§ 7-11)

7. Suffering for righteousness' sake.
8. Real suffering is always accompanied by real comfort.
9. The Christian, like his master, gives expression to his pain and sorrow.
10. When in suffering, remember: the Lord has willed it.
11. In everything, look to the Lord.