

The Christian Life

An Introduction to Calvin's *Institutes*

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Summary of Last Week

- The purpose of God's work of salvation in us is to make us holy as He is holy
- Scripture gives us the framework by which we can pursue this goal of personal holiness
- Since we need help to do so, Calvin wrote this *Little Book on the Christian Life*, in which he constructs a Scriptural model for righteous living. This model contains two parts:
 - The Scriptural mandate for *inward change* in the believer to hate sin and love righteousness (ch. 1 [bk. 3, ch. 6])
 - The Scriptural mandate for *outward change* in the believer to endeavor after personal holiness (chs. 2-5 [bk. 3, chs. 7-10])

Class 3 | Self-Denial in the Christian Life

***Christian Life* ch. 2 | *Institutes* bk. 3, ch. 7**

- The Scriptural Model for Christian Living: Self-Denial (§ 1-3)
- Self-Denial and Loving Others (§ 4-7)
- Self-Denial and Loving God (§ 8-10)

The Scriptural Model for Christian Living: Self-Denial (§ 1-3)

The Scriptural Model of Christian Living: Self-Denial

1. Self-denial is required because we are not our own (Rom 12:1-2)
 - Since it is the duty of believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God (Rom 12:1), “Let then our **first step** be to abandon ourselves, that we may apply all our strength to obedience to God.”
2. Self-denial means singular devotion to God (Matt 16:24)
3. Self-denial creates a self-controlled, upright, and godly life (Titus 2:11-14)

Self-Denial and Loving Others (§
4-7)

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4. Self-denial gives us the right attitude toward others
5. Self-denial makes loving others possible
6. Loving others as image bearers
7. Loving others from sincere affection

Self-Denial and Loving God (§ 8-10)

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8. Self-denial helps us love God

- Every success is the result of God's blessing
- Without God's blessing, every success inevitably becomes misery and misfortune

9. Therefore, trust in God's blessing only

- The Christian will only pursue lawful means of achieving success
- The Christian will not burn with lust for achieving success
- The Christian will not grow impatient or curse God when his desired success is not achieved

10. Self-denial helps us bear adversity