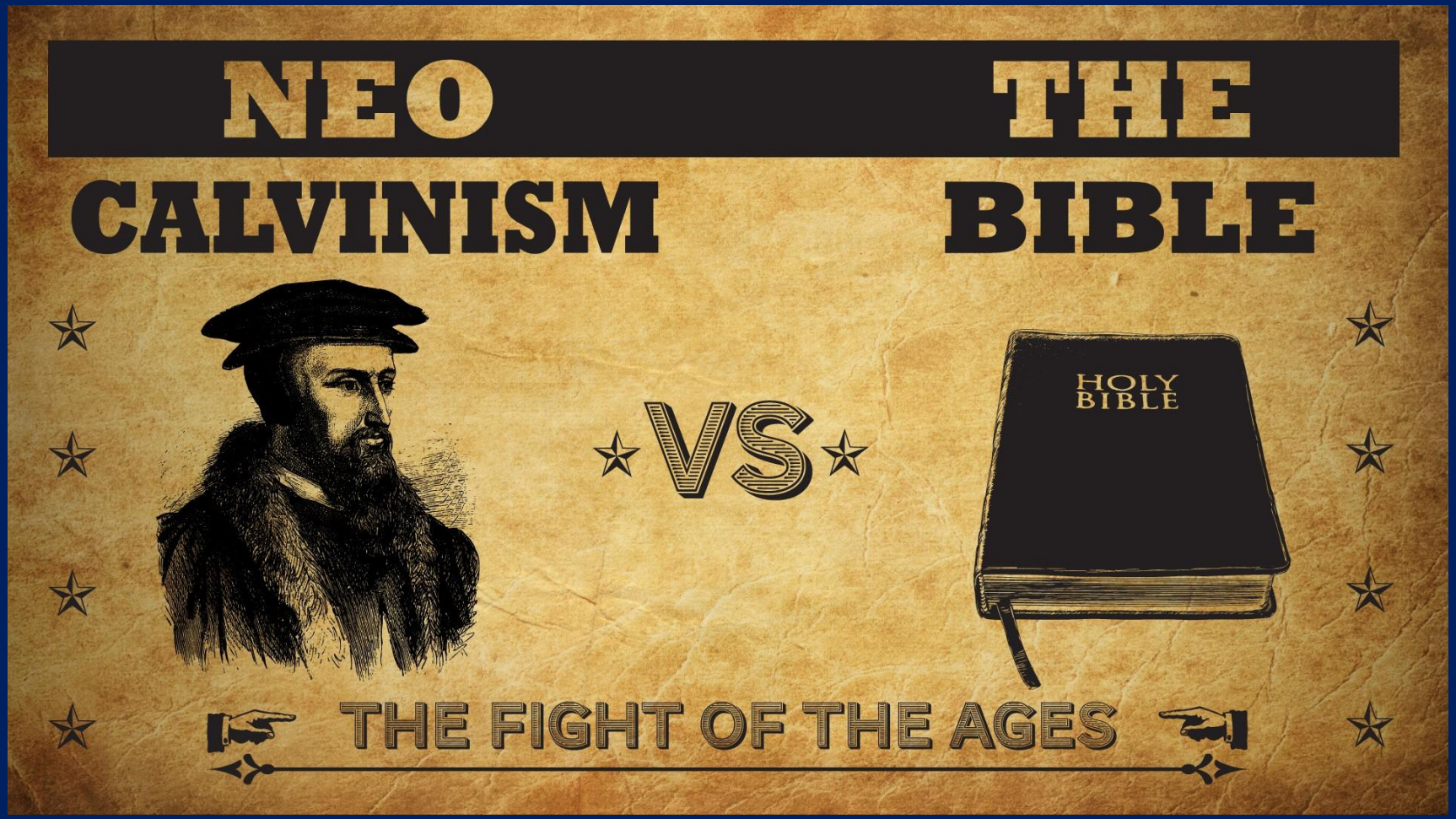




Dr. Andy Woods
Senior Pastor – Sugar Land Bible Church
President – Chafer Theological Seminary

Neo-Calvinism vs. The Bible

I. Calvinism's Mixed Blessing

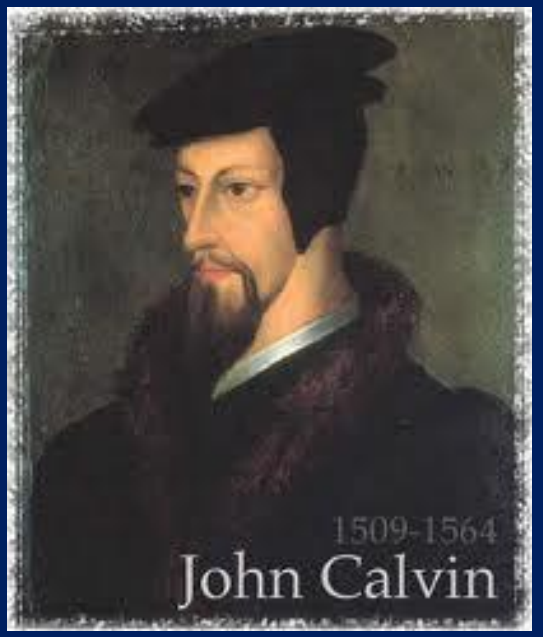
II. Why Critique Calvinism?

III. The Source of Calvin's Theology

IV. Calvin's Manner of Life

V. <u>TULIP Through the Grid of Scripture</u>

VI. Conclusion



V. Running **TULIP** Through the Grid of Scripture

A. Total Depravity

B. Unconditional Election

C. Limited Atonement

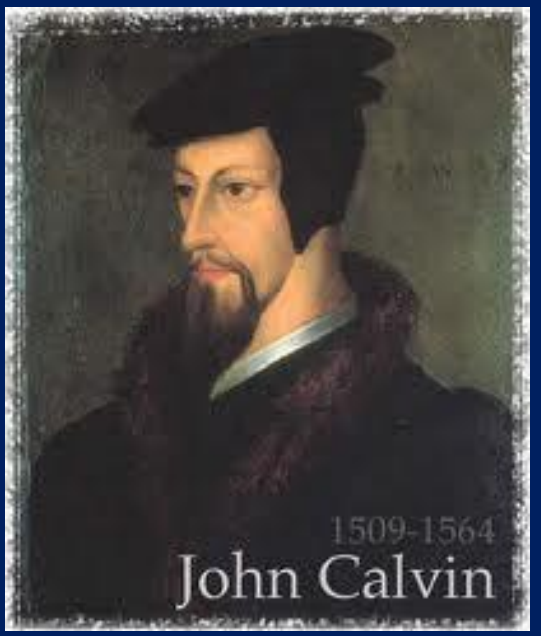
D. **Irresistible Grace**

E. Perseverance of the Saints



D. Irresistible Grace

1. **Calvinistic definition**
2. Calvinistic arguments
3. Man can resist God's grace
4. Man can resist God by disbelieving
5. John 6:44?



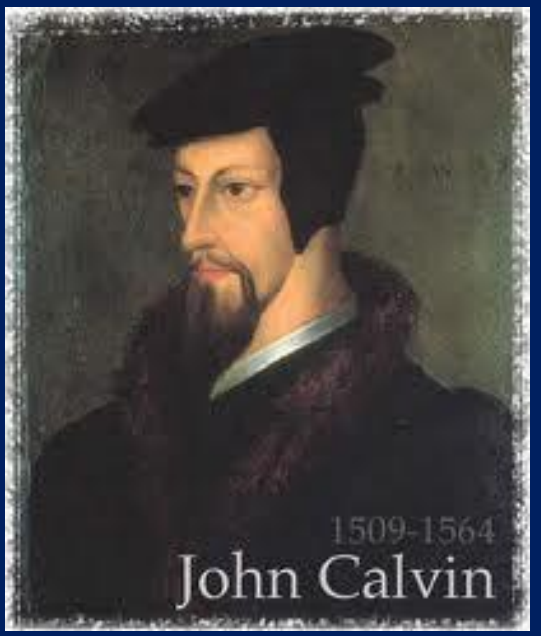
Irresistible Grace = Regeneration Precedes Faith & Faith is a Gift

"I" stands for "Irresistible Grace." Faith is something "God irresistibly bestowed upon the elect without their having believed anything…By such reasoning, man…can't even hear the gospel—much less respond to the pleadings of Christ."

Bob Kirkland, *Calvinism: None Dare Call It Heresy; Spotlight on the Life and Teachings of John Calvin* (Eureka, MT: Lighthouse Trails, 2018), 34.

D. Irresistible Grace

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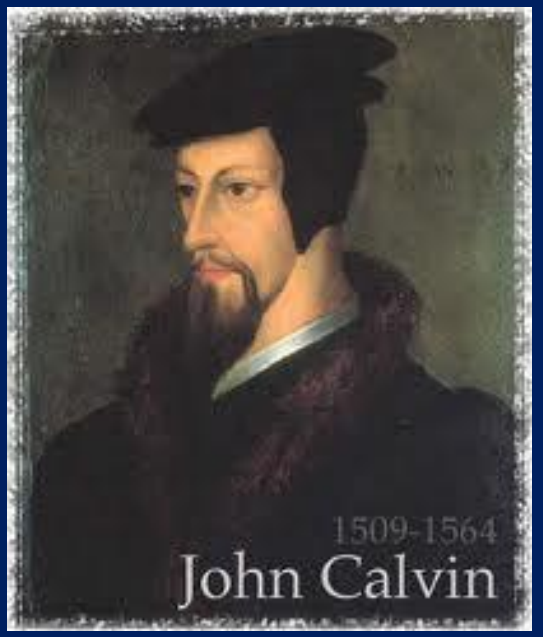


2. Calvinistic Arguments

a) **Faith is a gift**

b) Regeneration precedes faith

c) Lost man cannot seek God (Rom. 3:11)



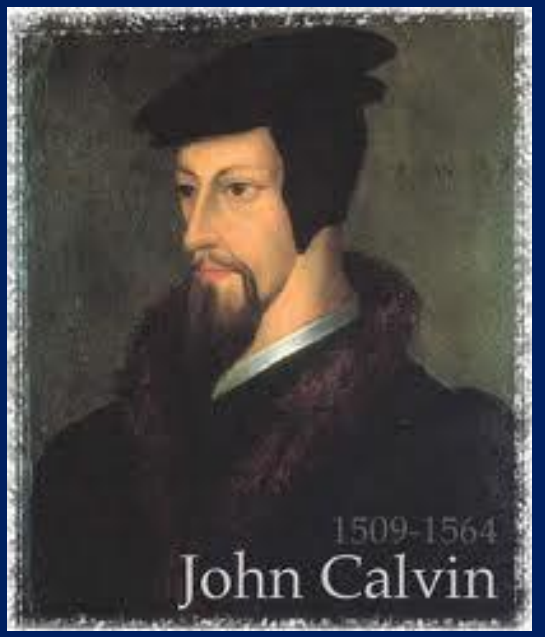
a) Faith is a Gift?

i. **Calvinist Examples**

ii. Faith is a work?

iii. Calvinist Proof texts

iv. Miscellaneous problems



Tom Wells

Wells compares spiritual deadness to “an old dry [Christmas] tree with —no fruit or ornaments of his own [his faith]. Then God comes along and hangs the bright jewel of **faith** on him. . . . There is no real connection between what he is and this gift of faith from God.”

Tom Wells, *Faith: The Gift of God* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1983), 56–57



No one just wakes up one morning and decides to believe in Jesus Christ. The reason he believes is because the Holy Spirit convicts him of sin, draws him to Christ, raises him to life, and grants him faith.

STEVE LAWSON

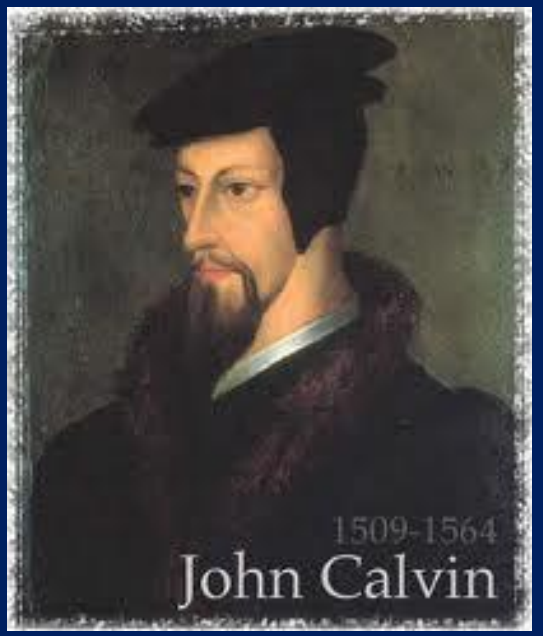
a) Faith is a Gift?

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iv. Miscellaneous problems



Sam Storms

"..even if what he or she does is simply to repent and believe the gospel, God's grace is seriously, albeit unwittingly, compromised."

Sam Storms, *Chosen for Life: The Case for Divine Election* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, a ministry of Good News Publishers, revised and expanded edition, 2007), p. 77.

Romans 4:4-5

4 “Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 5 But to the **one who does not work, but believes** in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.”



René A. Lopez

"Scripture never considers faith a work. Instead faith is always juxtaposed to works, as Paul stated in Romans 4:3–5. Human faith is but a passive response that receives God's free gift of eternal life. Who would accuse a beggar of working by holding out his hand to receive a dollar bill? No one!"

Rene A. Lopez, "Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," Bibliotheca Sacra 164 (July–September 2007): 266.

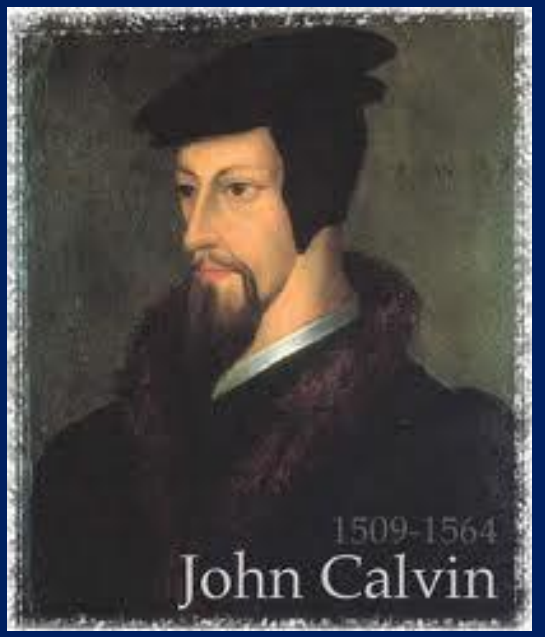
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iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

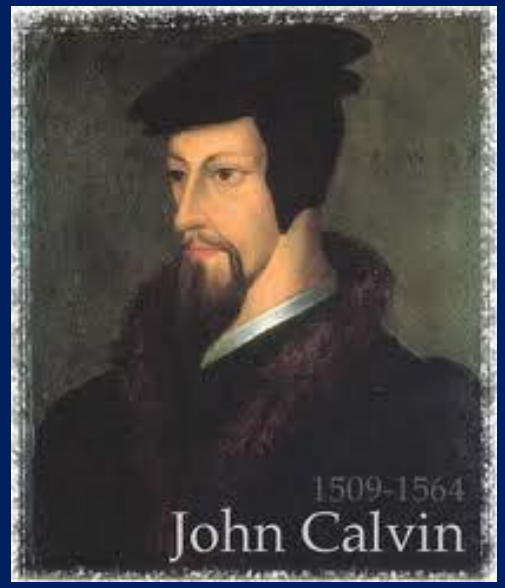
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(f) 1 Cor. 12:9

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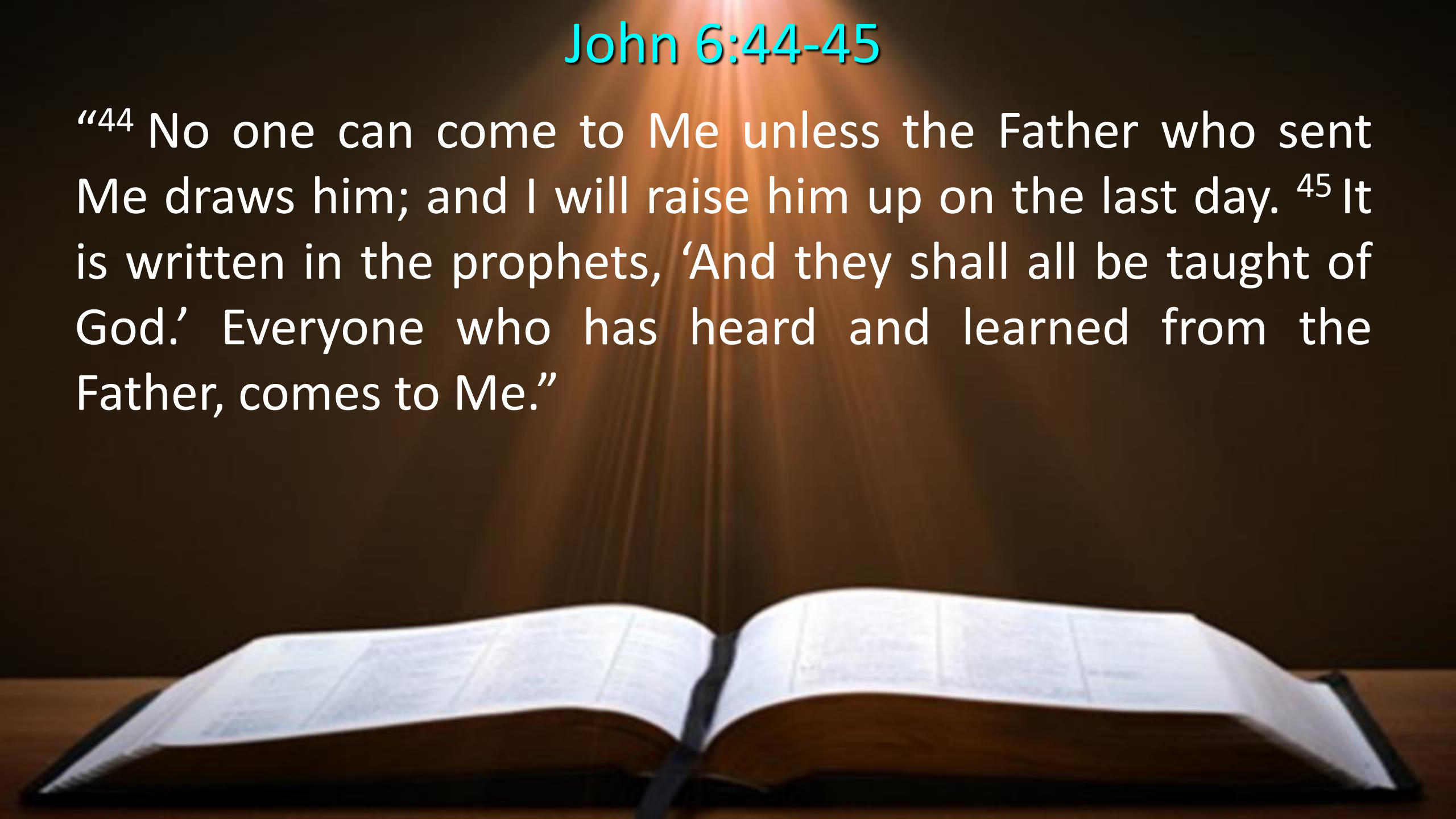
(h) Eph. 2:8-9

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(j) 2 Pet. 1:1

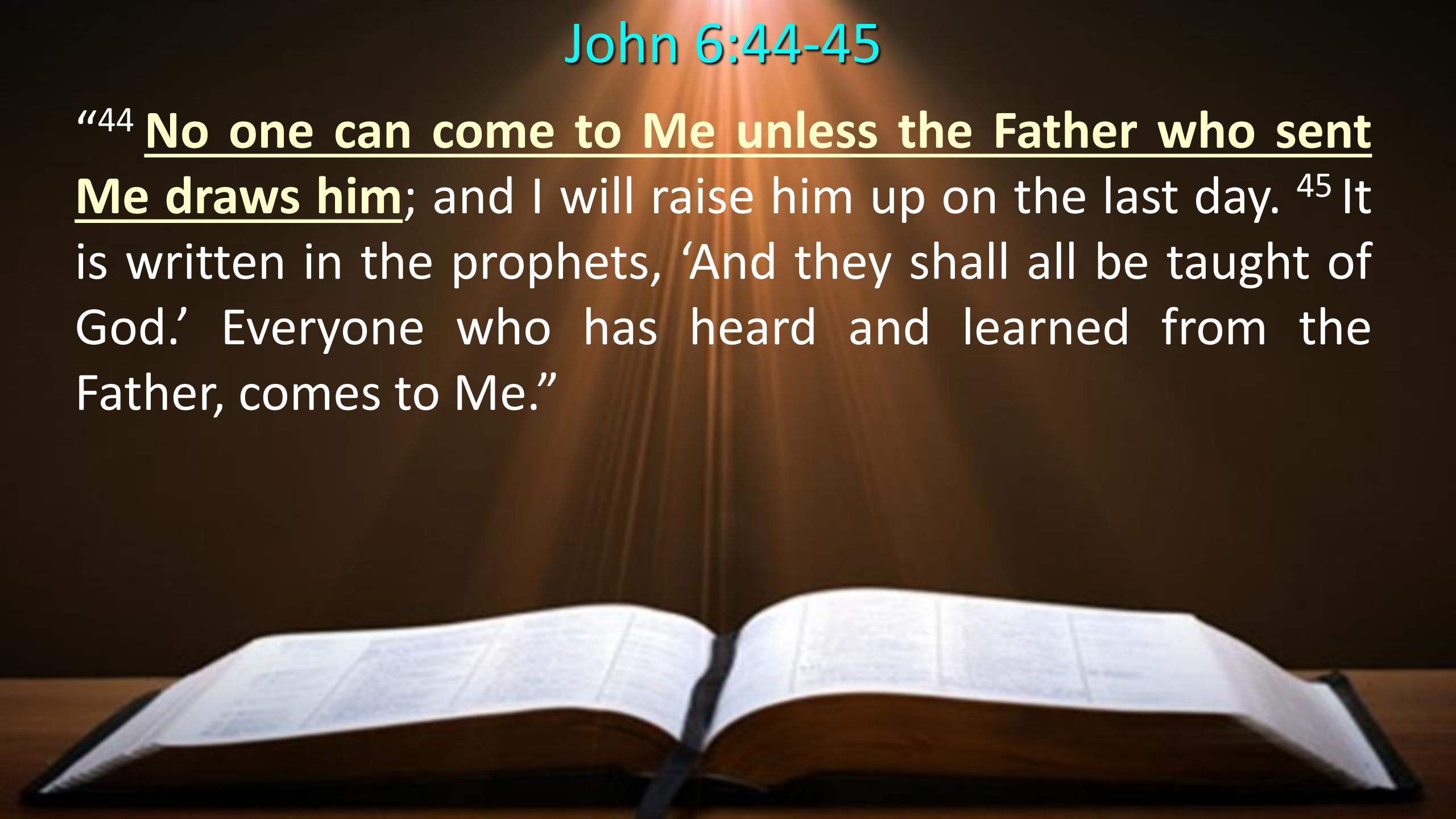
John 6:44-45

“[44] No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. [45] It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”



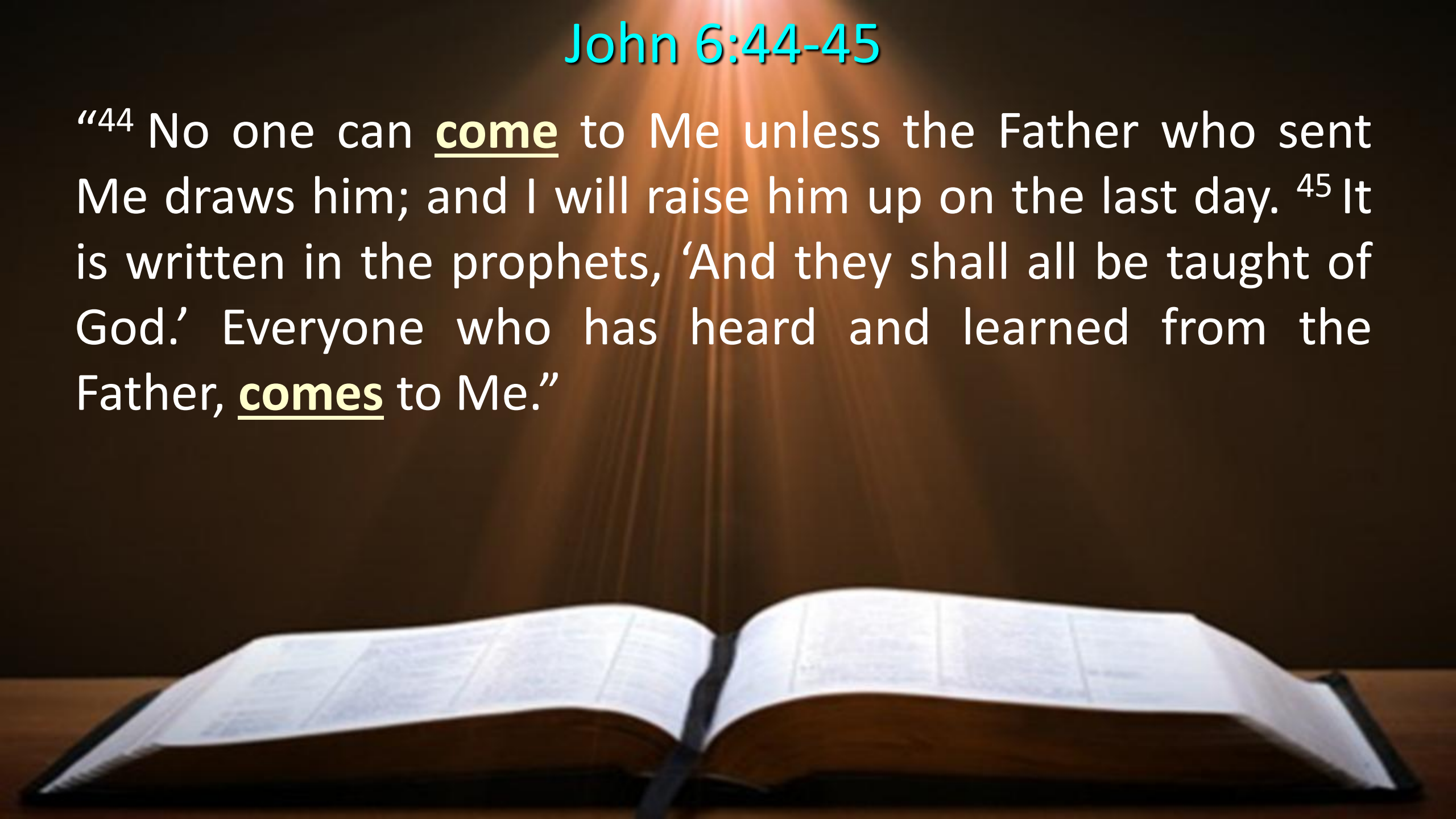
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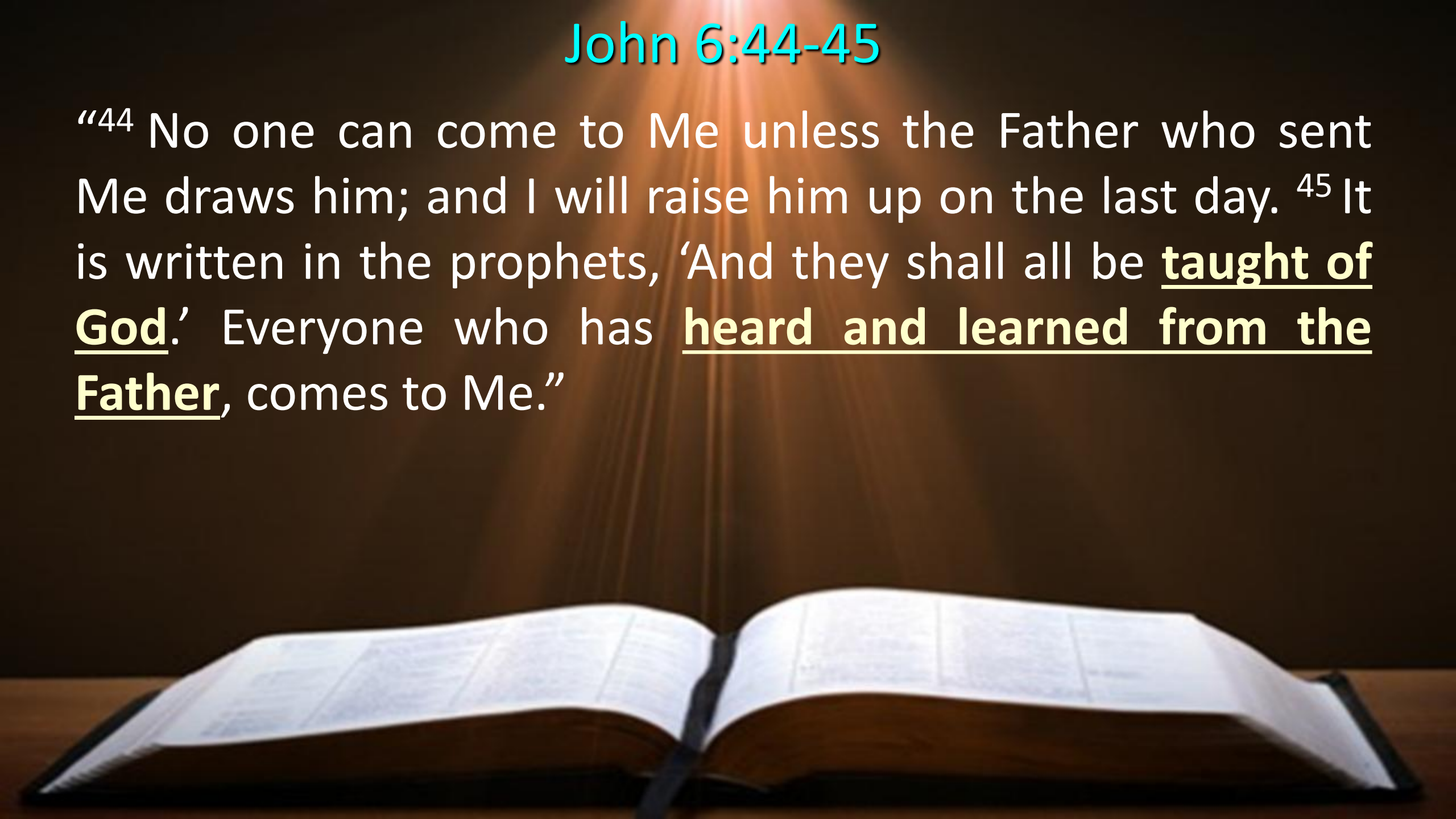
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John 6:44-45

“[44] No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. [45] It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be **taught of God**.’ Everyone who has **heard and learned from the Father**, comes to Me.”



iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

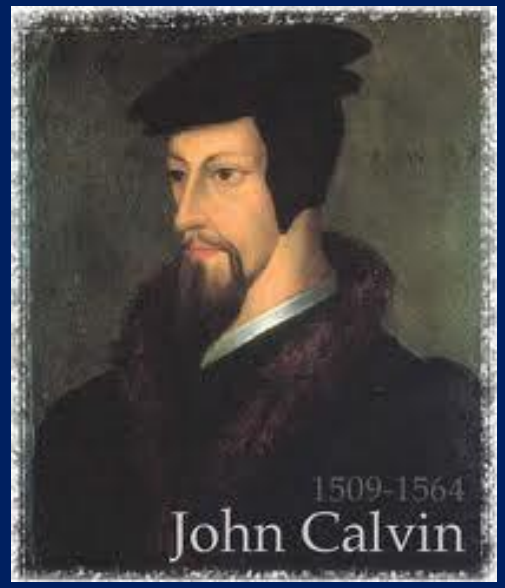
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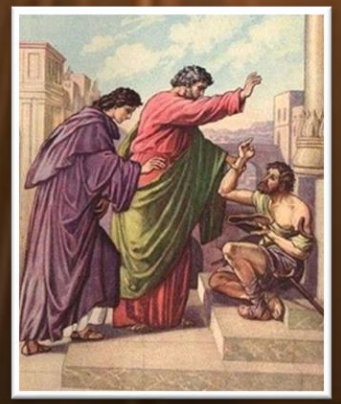
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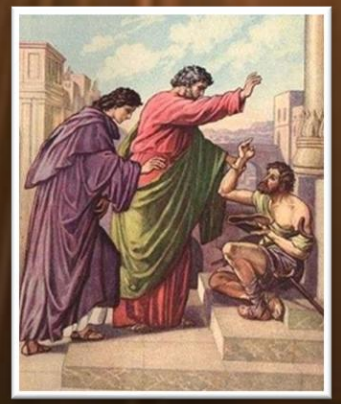
Acts 3:16

"And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all."



Acts 3:16

"And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and **the faith which *comes* through Him has given him** this perfect health in the presence of you all."





John MacArthur

The Gospel According to Jesus, p. 69

"Either way, the meaning is inescapable: Faith is God's gracious gift. Jesus explicitly affirmed this truth: 'No one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father' (John 6:65). **Faith is also spoken of as a divine gift in Acts 3:16 ('The faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all')**, Philippians 1:29 ('To you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake'), and 2 Peter 1:1 ('Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours')."

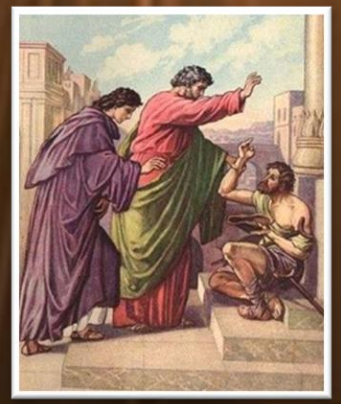
René A. Lopez

"MacArthur says that the phrase 'faith which comes through Him' means that faith is a divine gift. However, in the first part of this verse faith is the *means* by which the healing took place, and 'in His name' stresses the object (God) of that faith. The latter half of the passage is repetitious in order to rule out anything magical about the source of the healing. The man's faith in Peter's words resulted in healing through Jesus. 'Such faith was possible through Jesus: the proclamation of his power made it possible for people to believe.' Therefore, nothing in Acts 3:16 supports the gift-of-faith view."

"Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," Bibliotheca Sacra 164 (July–September 2007): 268-69.

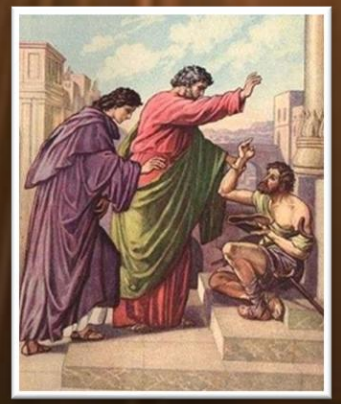
Acts 3:16

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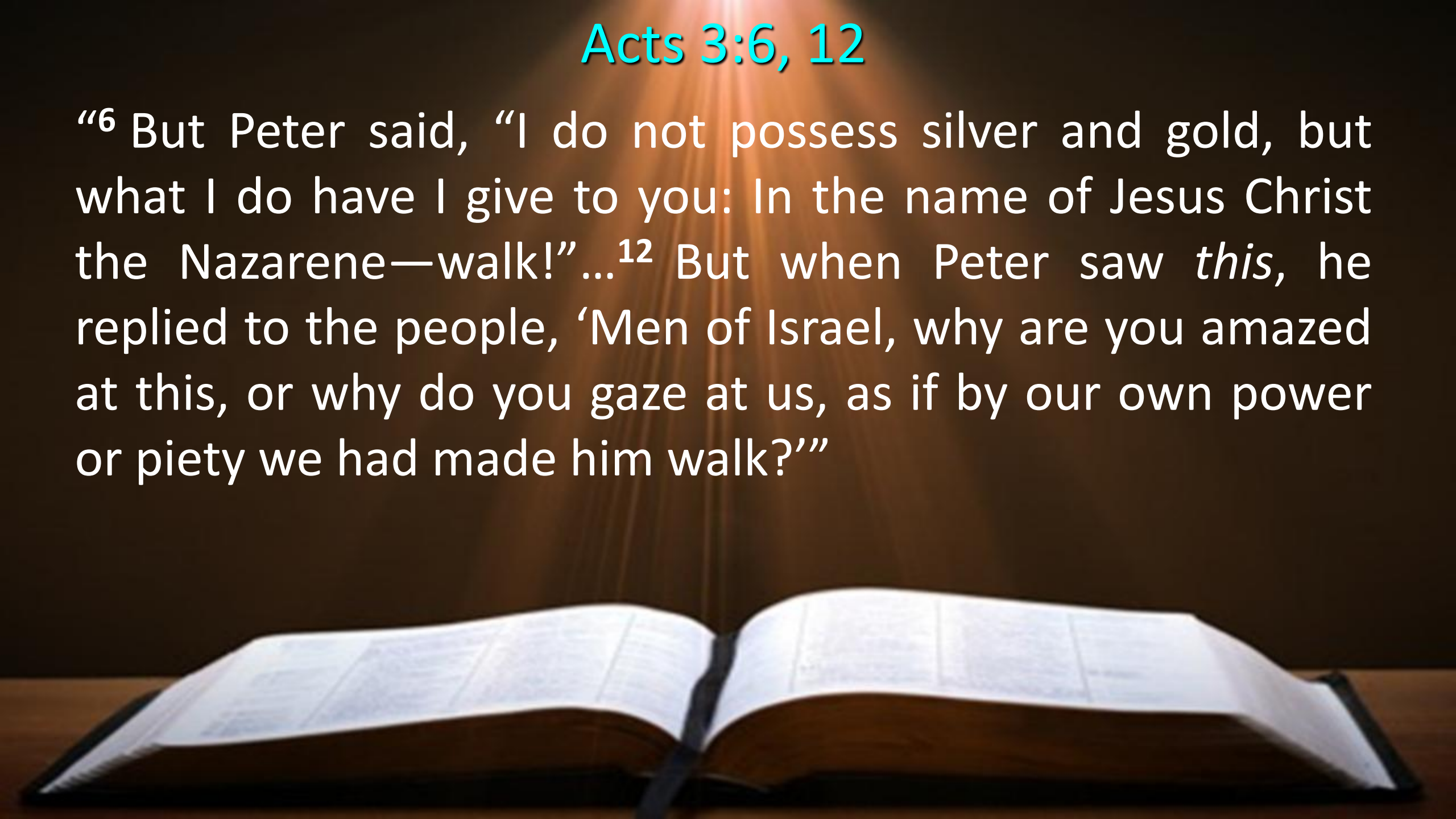
Acts 3:16

"And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and **the faith which *comes* through Him has given him** this perfect health in the presence of you all."



Acts 3:6, 12

“[6] But Peter said, “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!”…[12] But when Peter saw *this*, he replied to the people, ‘Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?’”



iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

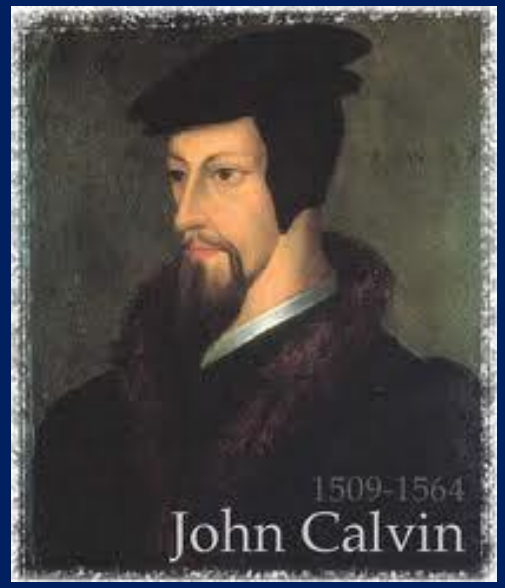
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(e) Acts 16:14



(f) 1 Cor. 12:9

(g) Rom. 12:3

(h) Eph. 2:8-9

(i) Philip. 1:29

(j) 2 Pet. 1:1

Acts 11:18

"When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has **granted** to the Gentiles also the **repentance** *that leads* to life.'"

True Repentance:

Changing Your mind



John 16:7-11

“[7] But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. [8] And He, when He comes, will **convict the world** concerning **sin** and righteousness and judgment; [9] concerning sin, **because they do not believe in Me**; [10] and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; [11] and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”



iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

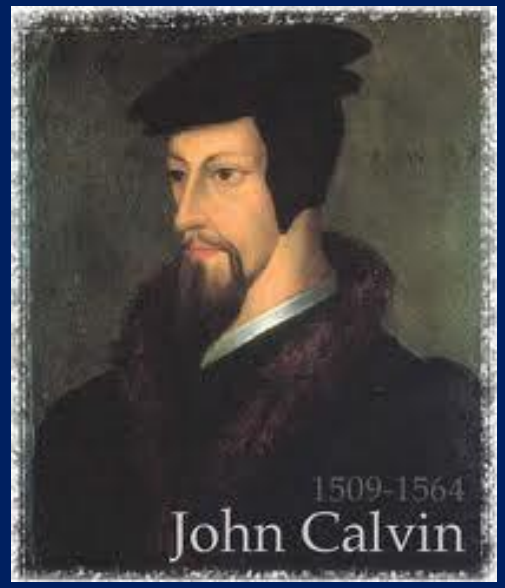
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Acts 16:14

"A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and **the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul**."



John 16:7-11

“[7] But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. [8] And He, when He comes, will **convict the world** concerning **sin** and righteousness and judgment; [9] concerning sin, **because they do not believe in Me**; [10] and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; [11] and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”



René A. Lopez

"The Greek…('opened') refers to 'opening of the eyes to make understanding possible and enable perception.' Many of the New Testament occurrences of…('heart') refer to the mind, as it does here; God opened Lydia's 'eyes of the heart,' as if removing a mental veil (2 Cor. 4:3–4), so that she would understand and respond. God enabled her to understand Paul's message so that she could believe and be saved. But opening her heart (or understanding) is not the same as giving her faith. **Acts 16 does not say God gave her faith. Instead He enabled her to understand so that she could exercise faith**…Paul wrote in Romans 3:11, 'There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God.' However, God was drawing (cf. John 6:44–45) Lydia to Himself before Paul arrived. Nevertheless giving a person the ability to understand differs from giving him or her faith to believe. God enlightened (a type of drawing) Lydia so that she could believe, but **it was still her faith, not God's gift of faith**."

"Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," Bibliotheca Sacra 164 (July–September 2007): 264 and n. 20.

iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

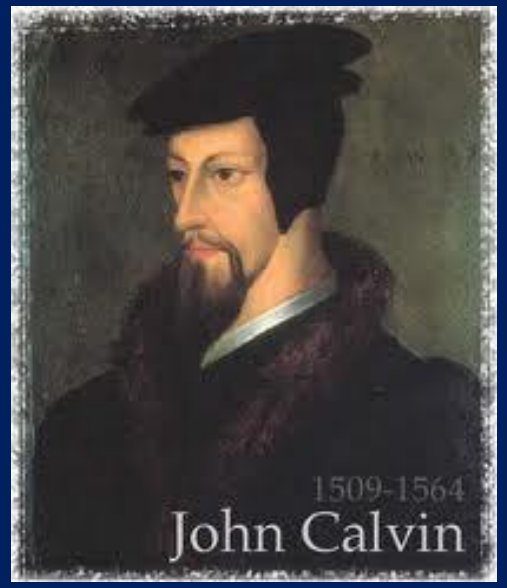
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(h) Eph. 2:8-9

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1 Corinthians 12:9

"to another **faith** by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit."



iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

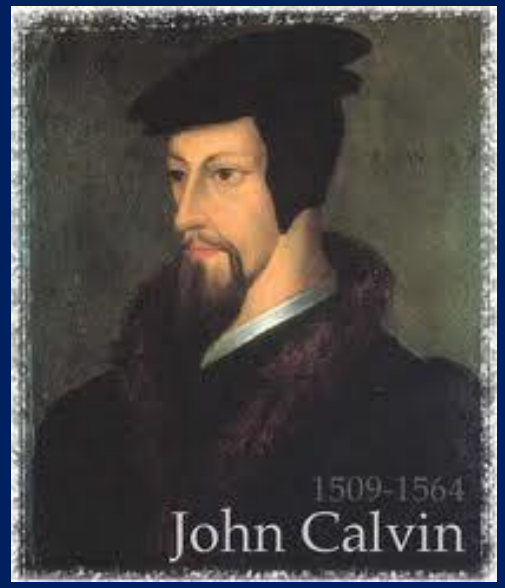
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Romans 12:3

“For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as **God has allotted to each a measure of faith**.”



iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

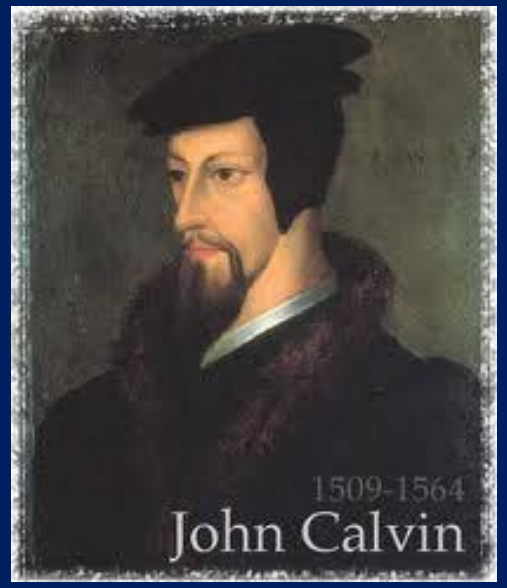
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Ephesians 2:8-10

"[8] For by grace you have been saved through **faith**; and **that** not of yourselves, *it is* **the gift of God**; [9] not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."



Gordon H. Clark

"A dead man cannot…exercise faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is an activity of spiritual life, and without the life there can be no activity. Furthermore, faith… does not come by any independent decision. The Scripture is explicit, plain, and unmistakable: 'for by grace are you saved through faith, and that is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God' (Ephesians 2:8). Look at the words again, 'it is the gift of God.' If God does not give a man faith no amount of willpower and decision can manufacture it for him."

Gordon H. Clark, *Predestination* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1987), 102.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“[8] For by grace you have been saved through **faith [*pistis*, feminine noun]**; and that **[*touto*, neuter demonstrative pronoun]** not of yourselves, *it is* the gift **[*dōron*, neuter noun]** of God; [9] not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ”



Harold Hoehner

"The real problem is with the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο, 'this.' Barth states, "The neuter pronoun 'this' may refer to…the noun 'faith.'" Some commentators think that it refers to πίστεως, the nearest preceding noun. A serious objection to this is that the feminine noun does not match the neuter gender of the pronoun…Furthermore, to refer back to any one of these words seems to be redundant."

Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 342-43.

Harold Hoehner

"Rather than any particular word it is best to conclude that τοῦτο refers back to the preceding section. This is common and there are numerous illustrations of such in Ephesians. For example, in 1:15 τοῦτο refers back to the contents of 1:3–14, in 3:1 it refers back to 2:11–22, and in 3:14 it refers back to 3:1–13. Therefore, in the present context, τοῦτο refers back to 2:4–8a and more specifically 2:8a, the concept of salvation by grace through faith."

Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 342-43.

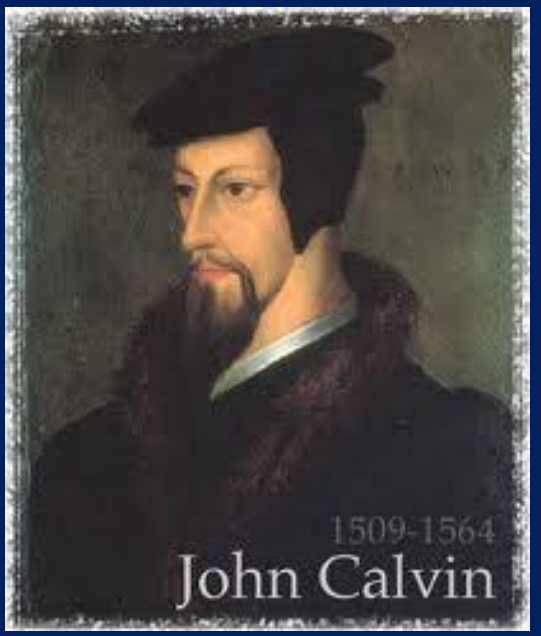
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What "Gift" and "Not by Works" Do Refer To

- "Gift" (*dōron*) never refers to "faith" (*pistis*) but…
  1. Everlasting life (John 4:10)
  2. Eternal life (Rom. 6:23)
  3. Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17)
  4. Justification (Rom. 5:15, 17)
  5. Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 9:15)



George Zeller, "What Is The Gift of God? A Study of Ephesians 2:8-9," online: http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/godgift.htm, accessed 04 November 2019.

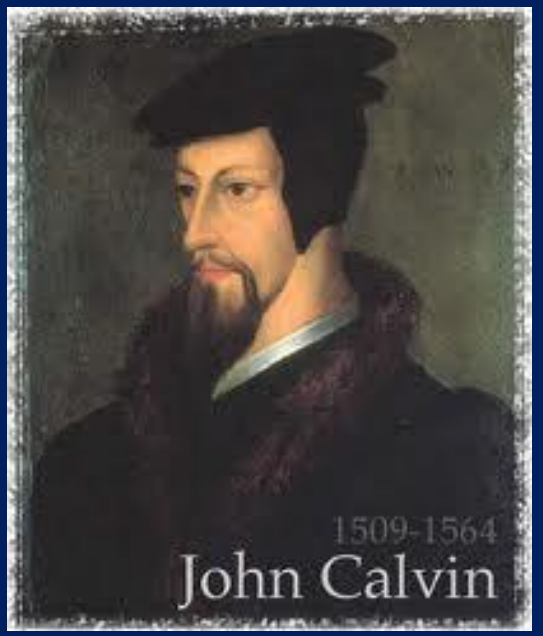
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What “Gift” and “Not by Works” Do Refer To

- “Not by works” never refers to “faith” (*pistis*) but…
  1. Justification (Rom. 3:20, 27, 28; 4:2, 6; Gal. 2:16)
  2. Election (Rom. 9:11; 11:6)
  3. Righteousness (Rom. 9:32)
  4. Salvation (Titus 3:5; 2 Tim. 1:9)
  5. Calling (2 Tim. 1:9)



George Zeller, “What Is The Gift of God? A Study of Ephesians 2:8-9,” online: http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/reformed/godgift.htm, accessed 04 November 2019.

Harold Hoehner

"The genitive could be possessive, 'God's gift,' or more likely a genitive of origin, 'gift from God.' In the present passage, the gift of God does not refer to 'faith' but rather it refers to whole concept of salvation. The contrast is stark not only in the words themselves but also in their position in the sentence. The words καὶ τοῦτο οὐκ ἐξ ὑμῶν, θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον are literally 'and this is not of yourselves, of God is the gift.' In conclusion, the 'gift' is that which is outside of ourselves and is to be received. **Therefore, the gift of salvation has its origin in God, its basis is grace, and it is received by means of faith**."

Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 343-44.

iii. Calvinist Proof-Texts

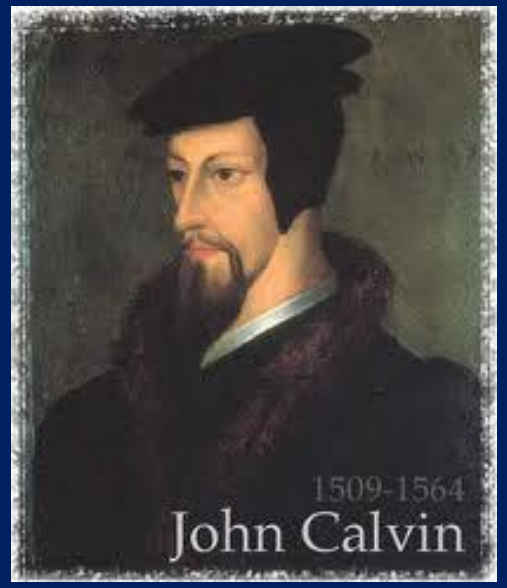
(a) John 6:27-29

(b) John 6:44-45

(c) Acts 3:16

(d) Acts 11:18

(e) Acts 16:14



(f) 1 Cor. 12:9

(g) Rom. 12:3

(h) Eph. 2:8-9

(i) **Philip. 1:29**

(j) 2 Pet. 1:1

Philippians 1:29

"For to you it has been **granted** for Christ's sake, not only **to believe in Him**, but also to suffer for His sake."



René A. Lopez

"However, the gift of faith is not the topic of the verse. In fact the word 'granted' (…'give graciously') should be understood here as conveying a privilege. It is a graciously granted privilege that God allows a person to believe in Christ and to suffer for Him. Since 'to believe' and 'to suffer' are parallel, it follows that if faith is a gift then so is suffering. But the Bible nowhere speaks of suffering as a divine gift. Furthermore, 'it is not God who suffers but man. Likewise, it is not God who believes but man. Both believing and suffering are actions of people.'"

"Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," Bibliotheca Sacra 164 (July–September 2007): 269-70.

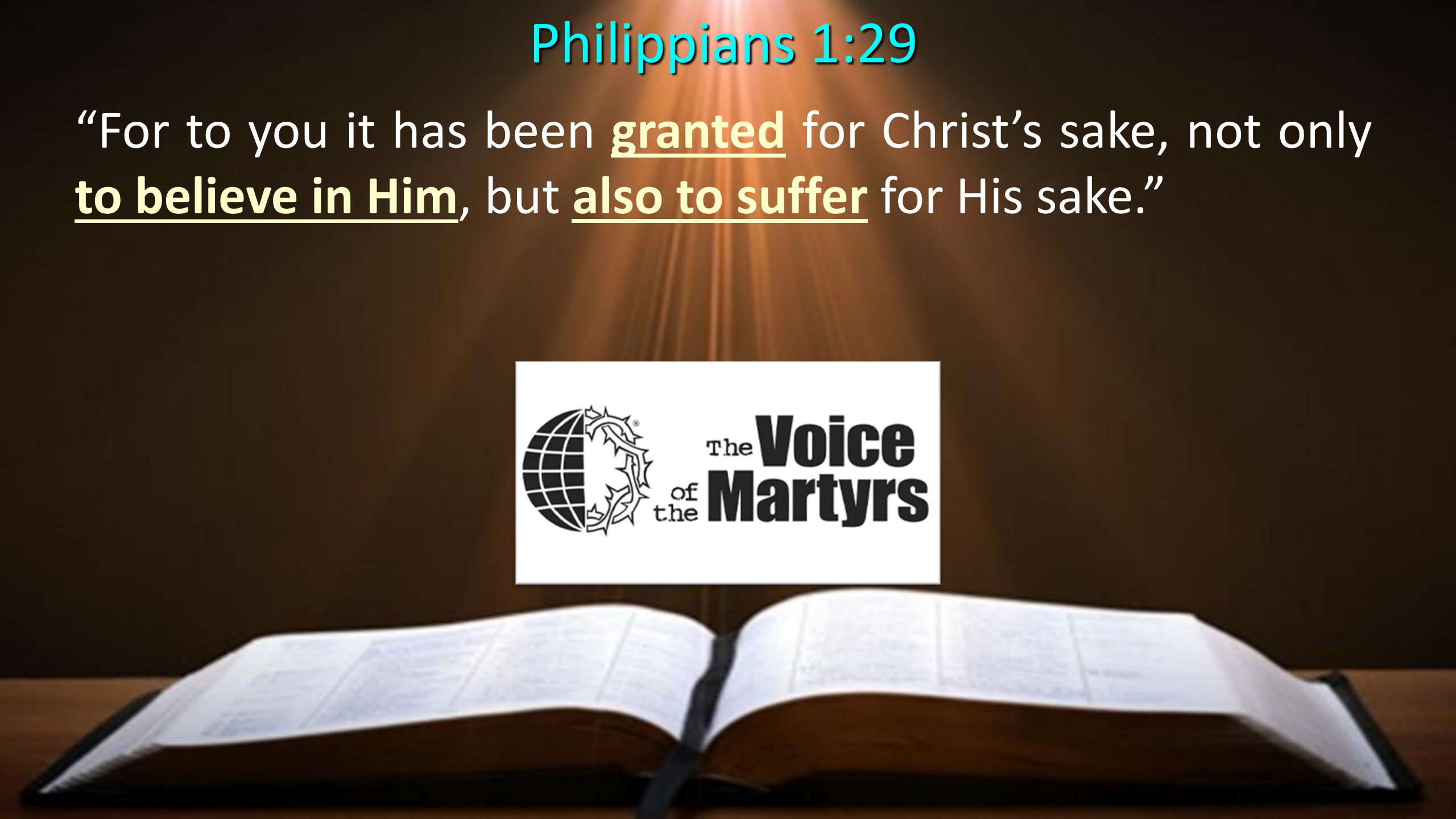
John 16:7-11

“[7] But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. [8] And He, when He comes, will **convict the world** concerning **sin** and righteousness and judgment; [9] concerning sin, **because they do not believe in Me**; [10] and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; [11] and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”



Philippians 1:29

"For to you it has been **granted** for Christ's sake, not only **to believe in Him**, but **also to suffer** for His sake."



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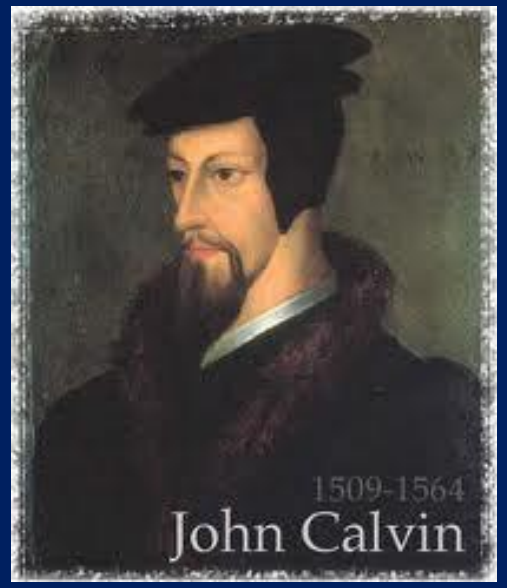
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(i) Philip. 1:29

(j) **2 Pet. 1:1**

2 Peter 1:1

"Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have **received a faith** of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ."



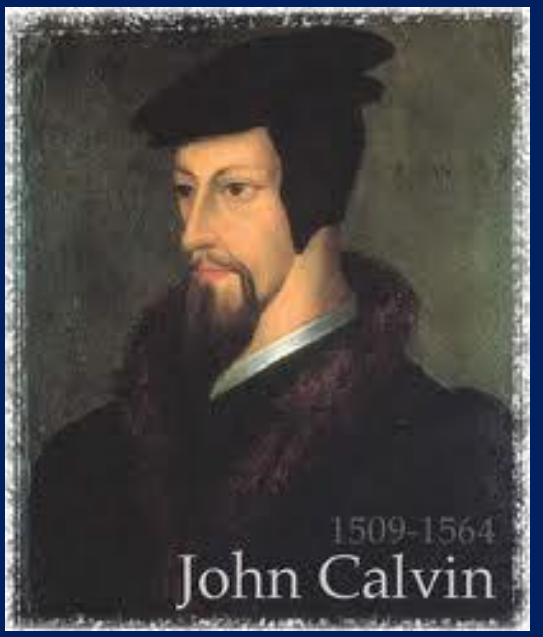
a) Faith is a Gift?

i. Calvinist Examples

ii. Faith is a work?

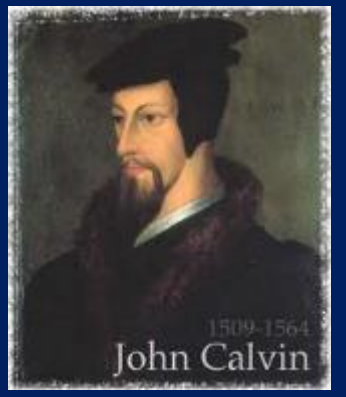
iii. Calvinist Proof texts

iv. <u>Miscellaneous problems</u>



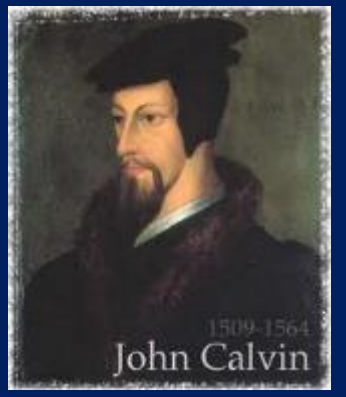
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- Roman Catholic roots



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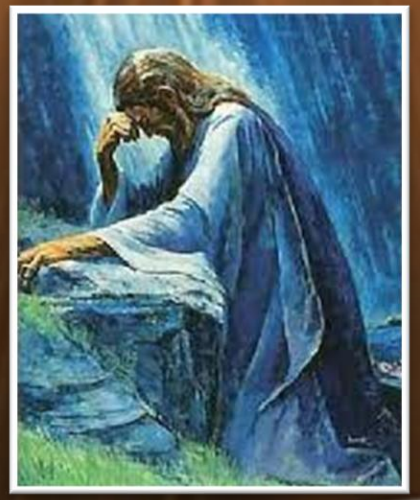
René A. Lopez

"A Roman centurion is another example of a person who exercised faith (Matt. 8:5–13). Marveling at his faith, Jesus said, 'Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel' (v. 10). Jesus' reference to the centurion's 'great faith' makes sense only if that faith came from the centurion and not God. For why would Christ emphasize the centurion's degree of faith if it came from God?"

"Is Faith a Gift From God or a Human Exercise?," Bibliotheca Sacra 164 (July–September 2007): 264.

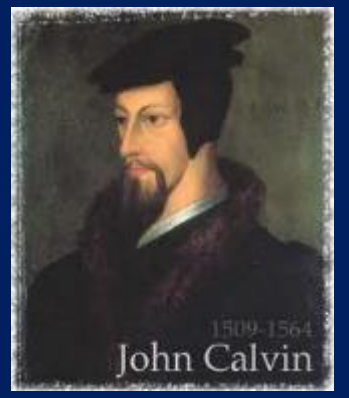
Luke 22:32

“but I have prayed for you, that **your faith** may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”



iv. Miscellaneous Problems

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The Responsibility to Believe

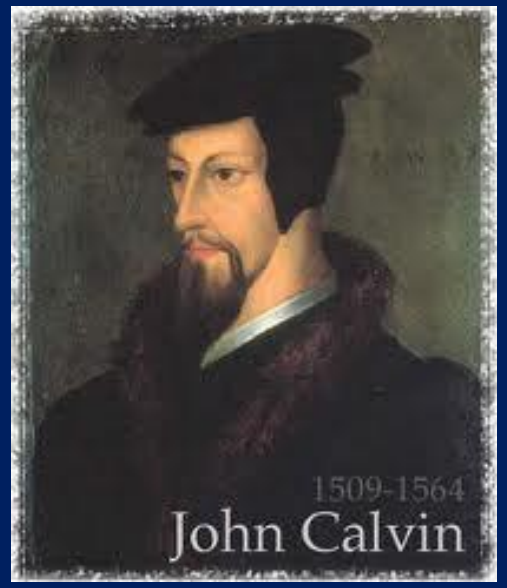
a. John 1:12-13

b. John 3:16

c. John 3:36

d. John 5:24

e. John 6:47



f. Acts 16:31

g. Rom. 3:21-22

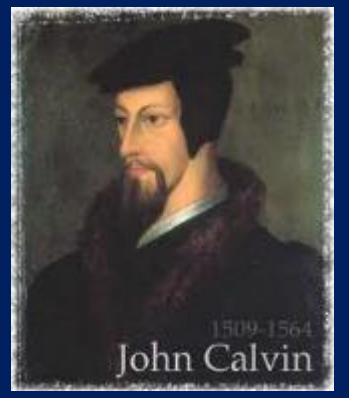
h. Rom. 3:25-26

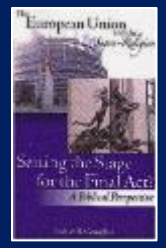
i. Rom. 4:3-6

j. Eph. 2:8

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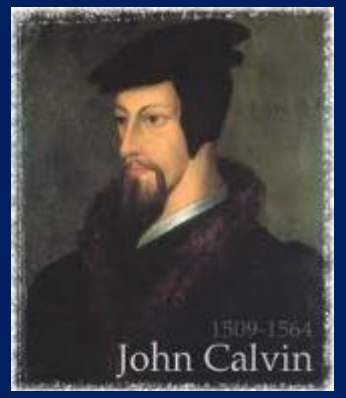
Dr. Robert R. Congdon

Oops! I Thought I Was a Four - Pt Calvinist (Greer, SC: Congdon Ministries International, 2014), 51.

"Furthermore, why would God admonish and warn unbelievers for being spiritually blind and deaf if it were not in their power to respond?…Is this not a mockery? It would be like chiding a legless man for being unable to walk."

iv. Miscellaneous Problems

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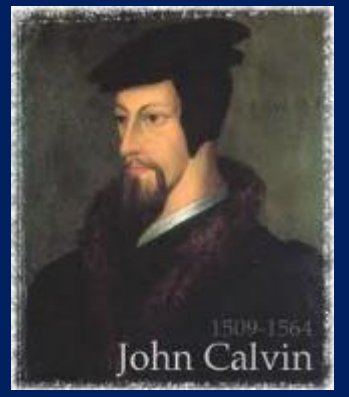
Charlie Bing

"When faith is called a dynamic (the same as calling it a power), it is confused with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the agent of salvation and the Power that effects a changed life. Faith is the instrument of salvation which, when exercised as a response to God's grace, secures the Spirit's salvation."

Charles C. Bing, "Lordship Salvation: A Biblical Evaluation and Response" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1991), 53.

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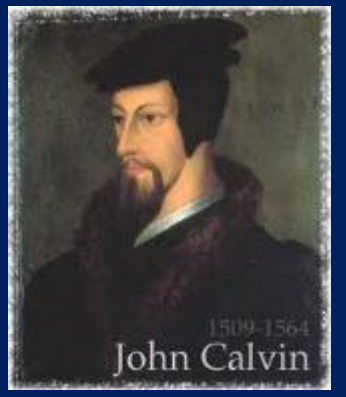
Carmen Bryant

"It is not God who believes but man, even though a work of God may have occurred previously to enable man to believe. It is man who performs the action. Linguistically, man is the subject, God the object. Saying that faith is a 'gift of God' reverses the subject-object relationship."

Carmen J. Bryant, "Salvific Faith: Gift from God or Action of Man? A Linguistic Approach" (Th.M. thesis, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1992), 51-53.

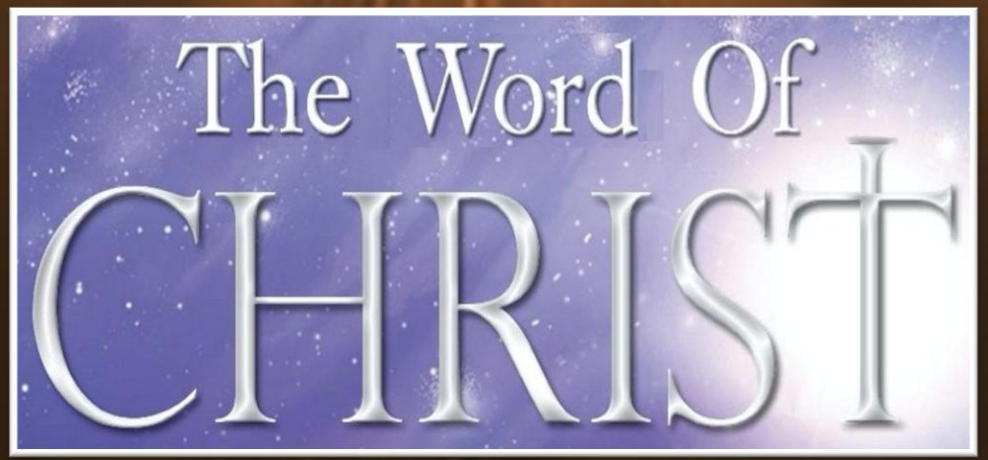
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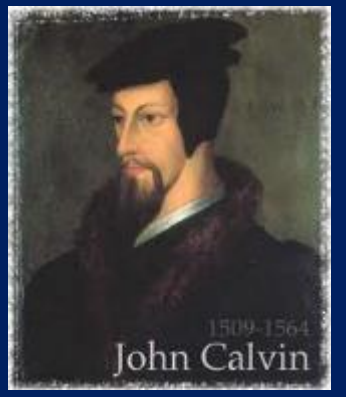
Romans 10:17

"So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."



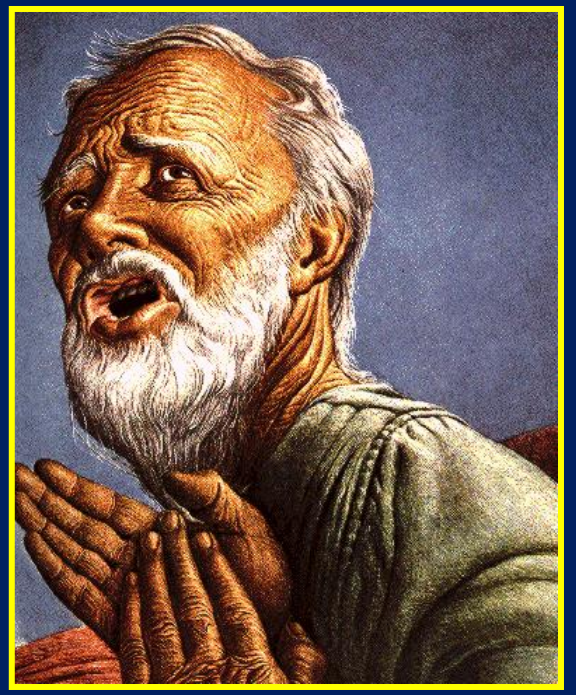
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Passages Conditioning Salvation on **Faith Alone** *(Sola Fide)*

- Genesis 15:6
- John 3:16; 5:24; 6:28-29, 47; 16:8-9; 20:30-31
- Acts 16:30-31
- Romans 1:16; Ephesians 2:8-9
- Hebrews 11:6



Belief – God's One Condition for Justification

Gen 15:6

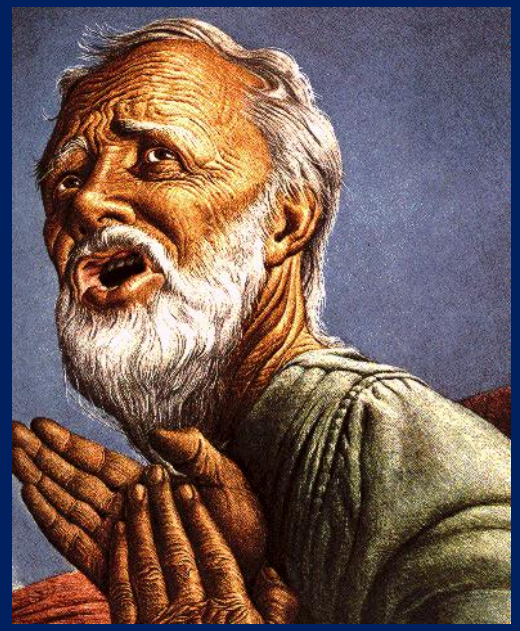
Then he **believed** in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever **believes** in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Acts 16:30-31

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "**Believe** in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."



Belief-God's One Condition for Justification



"…because upwards of 150 passages of Scripture condition salvation upon believing only (cf. John 3:16; Acts 16:31).

Lewis Sperry Chafer, vol. 7, *Systematic Theology*[b]
(Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 265-66.



John MacArthur, Jr.

Tape GC 90-21 on Lordship salvation, last part of tape, comments made during the closing invitation.

"If faith is a gift of God, THEN HOW DO I GET IT? Do I do nothing and hope that God will sovereignly bestow it upon me? Or, do I cry out to God and pray that He will give me the gift of saving faith? Dr. MacArthur apparently holds to this second option. At the end of one of his messages he gave a salvation appeal and said the following: "Faith is a gift from God...it is permanent...the faith that God gives begets obedience...God gave it to you and He sustains it...May God grant you a true saving faith, a permanent gift that begins in humility and brokenness over sin and ends up in obedience unto righteousness. That's true faith and it's a gift that only God can give, **and if you desire it pray and ask that He would grant it to you**."



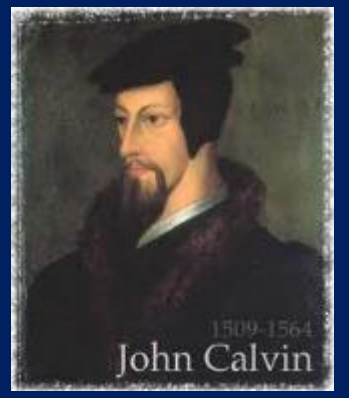
Jay Adams

Competent to Counsel, 70.

“But counselors, as Christians, are obligated to present the claims of Christ. They must present the good news that Christ Jesus died on the cross in the place of **His own**, that He bore the guilt and suffered the penalty for their sins. He died that all whom the Father had given to Him might come unto Him and have life everlasting. As a reformed Christian, the writer believes that counselors must not tell any unsaved counselee that Christ died for him, **FOR THEY CANNOT SAY THAT**. No man knows except Christ Himself who are **His elect** for whom He died." [emphasis mine]

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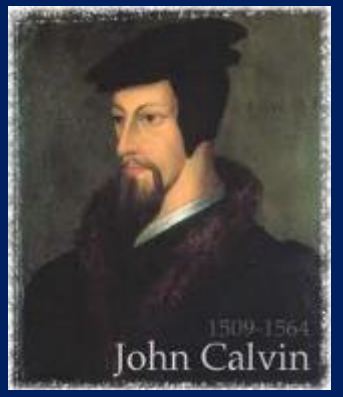
Roy L. Aldrich

"Thus an unscriptural doctrine of total depravity leads to an unscriptural and inconsistent plan of salvation. Doubtless the sinner is 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2:1b). If this means that regeneration must precede faith, then it must also mean that regeneration must precede all three of the pious duties Shedd outlines for the lost [as seen in the following sentence]. A doctrine of total depravity that excludes the possibility of faith must also exclude the possibilities of 'hearing the word,' 'giving serious application to divine truth,' and 'praying for the Holy Spirit for conviction and regeneration.' The extreme Calvinist deals with a rather lively spiritual corpse after all. If the corpse has enough vitality to read the Word, and heed the message, and pray for conviction, perhaps it can also believe."

Roy L. Aldrich, "The Gift of God," Bibliotheca Sacra 122 (July–September 1965): 249.

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Gary L. Nebeker

"the concept of infused faith for salvation bears a marked resemblance to the sacramentalism of the Roman Catholic Church. That is to say, faith becomes a transmitted and efficacious element which God gives to men for salvation."

Gary L. Nebeker, "Is Faith a Gift of God? Ephesians 2:8 Reconsidered," Grace Evangelical Society News, July 1989, 1.

Dave Hunt

"Most of those today, including evangelical leaders who hold Calvin in great esteem, are not aware that they have been captivated by the writings of a devout Roman Catholic, newly converted to Luther's Protestantism, who had broken with Rome only a year before. Oddly, Calvin kept himself on the payroll of the Roman Catholic Church for nearly a year after he claimed to have been miraculously delivered from the 'deep slough' of 'obstinate addiction to the superstitions of the papacy.'"

Dave Hunt, *What Love Is This? Calvinism's Misrepresentation of God*, 4th ed. (Bend, OR: Berean Call, 2013), 42.