

What's in a name—Calvin Christian School?

John Calvin, along with Martin Luther, was a leader of the 16th century movement that became known as the Protestant Reformation. These men and others called the church back to biblical Christianity and an understanding of salvation in Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone. Calvin was a young law student in France when he heard the message that Luther had proclaimed. His conversion led him to the life of a pastor and scholar in the French-speaking city of Geneva in Switzerland until his death in 1564.

As a scholar, Calvin wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and commentaries on most books of the Bible. He wanted to make the great truths of Christianity plain to the people of his congregation and city. He and the other reformers taught that God is sovereign in all of creation but more particularly sovereign in salvation. He taught clearly that “Jesus saves.” Calvin, following the apostle Paul, taught that God acts powerfully, by his Spirit, to call people to himself. Calvin preached, taught the children in his congregation, and worked for improvements in the city. His work was not always easy or without opposition, but he worked determinedly until his death at the age of 54. At the end of his life when he was ill and worn out, he was still working, and one of his friends urged him to rest and save his strength. Calvin replied, “What? Would you have the Lord find me idle?” For him, his work as a pastor was primary, and when he died, his friend said that the people of the city had lost their best comforter.

Calvin was also a school builder. He founded an academy in Geneva for the education of the young, realizing that Christians ought to be able to read and understand the Bible for themselves. He also believed that people should be educated broadly and that in addition to the Bible, they should understand the world around them. Calvin himself was educated in the best traditions of the day on the Latin classics, Greek and Hebrew, rhetoric, in short, the humanities. He believed that Christians should be excellently educated so that they could serve God in whatever calling was theirs. Not surprisingly, wherever the Reformation spread, literacy expanded to people of all classes.

Calvin Christian School is well-named as it seeks to educate young people in this great tradition of Christ-centered, biblical education. This commitment comes from a tradition furthered by the great reformers who believed that Christians need to serve Christ with their minds as well as their hearts and hands. As Calvin sent out young pastors to try to spread the gospel in France and neighboring countries, he knew that they were facing issues of life and death. In our day students need to be prepared for their lives as Christians whatever the future may hold. In this goal, Calvin Christian School follows its namesake, John Calvin who loved Christ, his word and his world and saw the importance of education for faithful Christian living.