

# Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4, Luther to Calvin Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

## 1. Abstract of Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4, Luther to Calvin, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Roger Green's lecture**, part of a Church History course titled "Reformation to the Present," focuses on the transition from **Martin Luther to John Calvin**. The session begins with a **devotional reading from the Gospel of John**, which Dr. Green indicates will relate to the lecture's content. The discussion then examines **Martin Luther's challenge to the medieval Roman Catholic Church** concerning indulgences, emphasizing the theological and economic implications of his 95 Theses and clarifying the historical context of this event. Subsequently, the lecture shifts to the **core issue of assurance of salvation** during the Reformation and how reformers like Luther and Calvin addressed this concern. Finally, Dr. Green introduces **John Calvin's life and foundational work**, including his conversion, his role in Geneva, and the initial development of his influential theological work, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

**2. 26 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4 – Double  
click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the  
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link  
there (Church History → Reformation to the Present).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4, Luther to Calvin

Briefing Document: Dr. Roger Green's Lecture on Martin Luther to John Calvin

**Overview:** This lecture by Dr. Roger Green covers the period from Martin Luther to John Calvin, focusing on the context of the late medieval Roman Catholic Church, the initial challenges posed by Luther (specifically regarding indulgences), and the subsequent theological responses of the Reformation, particularly highlighting the issue of assurance of salvation. The lecture then transitions to an introduction to John Calvin's life, work, and initial theological approaches.

#### Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

##### I. Introduction and Devotional (Page 1):

- Dr. Green begins the lecture with a devotional reading from John 5:19-24, emphasizing the Son's dependence on the Father and the gift of eternal life through belief. He notes this passage will be relevant to the lecture's content.
- The lecture is positioned within a larger Church History course, specifically as Session 4, bridging Martin Luther and John Calvin. Session 3 is noted as missing.
- The goal is to understand medieval Roman Catholicism as a distinct entity from contemporary Roman Catholicism by piecing together a "puzzle" in four parts.

##### II. The Context: Indulgences and Martin Luther (Pages 1-4):

- **Pope Leo X's Role:** Dr. Green portrays Pope Leo X as a "really bad guy" who depleted the papal treasury through lavish living and needed to raise funds for himself and St. Peter's Basilica.
- Quote: "So, just a reminder, we mentioned how bad Pope Leo X was. He was a really bad guy and an incredible person. And he had, and he needed, he had, when he came to be Pope, he came from, by the way, a very wealthy, influential family...the treasury of the papacy was pretty much wiped out with wild parties and his lavish living and everything."
- **The Sale of Indulgences:** Leo X sent indulgence sellers across Europe, including Friar Tetzel in Wittenberg.
- **Luther's 95 Theses:** Martin Luther, a theology professor at Wittenberg, responded to Tetzel by nailing his 95 Theses to the church door.

- The theses primarily revolved around the issue of indulgences.
- Example from Thesis 86: "the Pope's riches on this day far exceed the wealth of the richest millionaires. Cannot he, therefore, build one single basilica of St. Peter out of his own money rather than out of the money of the faithful poor?"
- **Misinterpretation of the Event:** Dr. Green clarifies that nailing the theses was not initially an act of protest but a common academic practice for theologians to initiate public discussion.
- Quote: "What Martin Luther is doing is very common in the medieval world. He's a professor of theology, it's his job to teach theology, and it's his job to dispute theological issues in public at the university...this is not an act of protest. He has no intention of protesting against the Roman Catholic Church."
- **The Role of the Printing Press:** The invention of the printing press facilitated the widespread dissemination of Luther's ideas, including to the Pope.
- **Economic Implications:** Luther's challenge to indulgences posed not only a theological problem but also an economic one for the church by potentially drying up revenue. He was also seen as defending the poor against exploitation.
- **Luther's Intent:** While his language was "incendiary" and the office of the papacy was "very disturbing" to him, Luther's initial aim was theological discussion and reform, not necessarily the dissolution of the Catholic Church.
- **The Unraveling of Catholic Doctrine:** The 95 Theses challenged the system of indulgences, which in turn had implications for penance, works of supererogation, and the understanding of sin.

### III. The Reformation's Response: The Issue of Assurance (Pages 4-8):

- **Justification by Faith vs. Assurance:** While the Reformation is often seen as fought over justification by faith, Dr. Green argues that the equally important issue was **assurance of salvation**.
- Quote: "I've always thought that that was overblown because I think there's another issue that's being challenged here. I think it's an equally important issue, and that's assurance."
- **Lack of Assurance in Medieval Catholicism:** People in the medieval Roman Catholic world lacked certainty about their salvation due to concerns about

unforgiven mortal sins, punishment in purgatory, and the indefinite nature of penance.

- Quote: "They couldn't have a calm heart and a calm mind that they were God's children and that someday when they died, they were going to go and be with God. They were always worried about all of the punishment due to the sins that they had committed in this life."
1. **The Reformers' Response to Lack of Assurance: Certainty of Redemption:**  
Believers can be sure of their redemption through Christ's finished work, not their own works.
    - Example: John 5:24 - "Truly, truly I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life."
    - Other cited passages: John 3:36, 1 John 1:7.
  1. **Perseverance of the Saints (God's Perseverance):** Redemption is maintained by God's faithfulness, not the believer's effort to hold on.
    - Quote: "Perseverance of the Saints was not I'm having trouble holding on to God. Perseverance of the Saints was God's perseverance in holding on to his believers."
    - Cited passage: John 10:28-29.
  1. **Knowing You Are Redeemed:** The Reformers wanted people to have the assurance of knowing they were saved.
  2. **Rejection of Purgatory:** Purgatory does not exist, offering immense relief and assurance to believers.
    - Quote: "You can almost hear people giving a sigh of relief that they were convinced biblically, intellectually, and experientially there's no such thing as purgatory."
  1. **Justification by Grace:** Salvation is by God's grace, not earned by works, providing freedom from fear and uncertainty.
    - Quote: "We're justified by grace. We're God's children by his grace. It's by his grace that he saves us."
  - **The Impact of the Reformation Message:** The message of assurance brought a "sigh of relief" across Europe.

- **Underlying Theological Deficiency:** The lecture emphasizes that the issues the Reformation addressed were rooted in a "deficiency in the theology of scholasticism and of the entire medieval church," particularly the inability to provide genuine assurance of salvation.
- Quote: "The church was unable to satisfy man's desire for genuine assurance of salvation."

#### IV. Introduction to John Calvin (Pages 9-16):

- **Biographical Highlights:** Born in Noyon, France.
- Studied law at various universities (Orléans, Bourget, University of Paris) and humanism, providing him with a legalistic and well-rounded education.
- Personality contrasted with Martin Luther: Calvin was a careful, organized French thinker who wrote in Latin and French, while Luther was an extemporaneous and less organized preacher.
- Key turning point at the University of Paris: Began reading Luther's writings and experienced a "sudden conversion" in 1533.
- Decision to leave the Roman Catholic Church: Unlike Luther who was excommunicated, Calvin chose to leave, believing the Roman Catholic Church had strayed from the true biblical church.
- Moved to Basel, a reformed city, where in **1536** he began writing his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* as a defense of Reformation theology.
- Joined William Farrell in Geneva to consolidate the Reformation but was eventually expelled by those who opposed their strict Protestant ethic.
- Went to Strasbourg, a French-speaking Reformation city, where he met Martin Bucer, who significantly influenced his theology.
- In Strasbourg, he elaborated on the *Institutes* and wrote his first commentary on the book of Romans.
- Returned to Geneva in **1541** at the invitation of its leaders and became a highly influential figure through his preaching, writing, and teaching (though without formal political power).
- Died and was buried in an unmarked grave in Geneva.

- **The Michael Servaitis Incident:** Dr. Green clarifies that the burning of Michael Servaitis (a Unitarian) at the stake in Geneva was the decision of the city council, not John Calvin. Calvin opposed Servaitis's theology and warned him not to come to Geneva but had no legal authority in the matter. Heretics were often burned at the stake due to the fear of social disorder.

#### V. Calvin's Work (Pages 17-19):

- **Great Mediator:** Calvin played a significant role in mediating theological differences among Reformation leaders (e.g., on the Lord's Supper).
- **Building a "City of God" in Geneva:** Calvin aimed to establish Geneva as a model Reformation city, though not a theocracy due to his lack of political power.
- **Establishment of the Geneva Academy:** This institution attracted students from across Europe to learn Reformation theology and then disseminate it.
- **Systematizer/Organizer of Theology:** Calvin is recognized for his systematic and organized presentation of Reformation theology, a contrast to Luther's more extemporaneous approach.
- **Developing Organizing Principles for Theology:** Calvin provided methodological principles for theological study, such as the relationship between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves.
- **Knowledge of God and Self:** Calvin argued that all true wisdom begins with the knowledge of God, which leads to self-knowledge, and vice versa, forming a continuous cycle. He considered it impossible to truly know oneself without understanding one's Creator, contrasting with the modern secular perspective.

#### Key Quotes:

- **(On Leo X):** "So, just a reminder, we mentioned how bad Pope Leo X was. He was a really bad guy and an incredible person..."
- **(On Luther's Theses):** "...this is not an act of protest. He has no intention of protesting against the Roman Catholic Church. He's a good Roman Catholic, but he is a teacher of theology, and it's his job to do this."
- **(On Assurance):** "But I've always thought that that was overblown because I think there's another issue that's being challenged here. I think it's an equally important issue, and that's assurance."

- **(On Medieval Fear):** "They were always worried about suffering in purgatory for maybe thousands of years after they died before they could go and meet with God. So, a basic issue of the Reformation, a basic issue of people like Luther, was the issue of assurance."
- **(On Perseverance of the Saints):** "Perseverance of the Saints was not I'm having trouble holding on to God. Perseverance of the Saints was God's perseverance in holding on to his believers."
- **(On Purgatory):** "You can almost hear people giving a sigh of relief that they were convinced biblically, intellectually, and experientially there's no such thing as purgatory."
- **(On Calvin leaving the Catholic Church):** "Calvin's understanding of the Roman Catholic Church was that the Roman Catholic Church is what had strayed. So, in order to stay in the true church, he had to leave the Roman Catholic Church."
- **(On Servaitis):** "The burning at the stake was not John Calvin's doing."
- **(On the Goal of Burning Heretics):** "They are afraid that heretics will breed a social disorder. They'll bring disorder to society."
- **(On Calvin as a Systematizer):** "Calvin was a great systematizer of theology, of Reformation theology. He organized Reformation theology."
- **(On Knowledge of God and Self):** "All the wisdom we possess begins with the knowledge of God, and that leads to a knowledge of ourselves. But also, the more we know about ourselves, the more we know about God."

**Conclusion:** Dr. Green's lecture provides a valuable overview of the transition from Luther's initial challenges to the more structured approach of John Calvin. It emphasizes the critical role of the assurance of salvation as a driving force behind the Reformation and introduces key aspects of Calvin's life and foundational contributions to Reformation theology, setting the stage for further exploration of his doctrines.

## 4. Study Guide: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4, Luther to Calvin

Study Guide: Martin Luther to John Calvin

### Key Concepts:

- **Indulgences:** Certificates sold by the Catholic Church that promised to reduce or cancel the punishment for sins.
- **Justification by Faith:** The Protestant doctrine that salvation is achieved through faith in Jesus Christ alone, not through good works or sacraments.
- **Assurance of Salvation:** The Protestant belief that believers can have confidence and certainty in their eternal salvation.
- **Purgatory:** A state in Catholic theology where souls of those who have died in grace must undergo purification before entering heaven.
- **Perseverance of the Saints:** The Protestant doctrine that God will preserve all true believers to the end, ensuring their final salvation.
- **Sola Gratia (Grace Alone):** The Reformation principle that salvation is solely a gift from God's grace, not earned by human merit.
- **95 Theses:** A list of propositions written by Martin Luther in 1517, challenging the sale of indulgences and other church practices.
- **Printing Press:** A technological innovation that allowed for the widespread dissemination of texts, including Luther's writings.
- **Excommunication:** Formal exclusion from the sacraments and membership of the Catholic Church.
- **Humanism:** A Renaissance intellectual movement that emphasized classical Greek and Roman literature, philosophy, and human potential.
- **Conversion:** A significant turning point in one's life involving a deep commitment to religious faith.
- **Institutes of the Christian Religion:** John Calvin's comprehensive and systematic theological work that articulated the principles of Reformed theology.



- **Geneva Academy:** An educational institution founded in Geneva that became a center for Reformed theological training and the dissemination of Reformation ideas.
- **Systematizer of Theology:** One who organizes theological doctrines into a coherent and logical framework.
- **Knowledge of God and Self:** A foundational principle in Calvin's theology, emphasizing the interconnectedness of understanding God and understanding oneself.
- **Theocracy:** A system of government in which religious leaders rule in the name of God or a god.
- **Heretic:** A person holding religious beliefs that contradict the official doctrines of a church.

### Short-Answer Quiz:

1. Explain the primary issue that Martin Luther addressed in his 95 Theses and what his initial intention was in posting them.
2. Describe two reasons why Luther's actions with the 95 Theses had a significant impact beyond a typical academic debate.
3. According to the lecture, what was a core concern of the Reformers that they believed the medieval Roman Catholic Church failed to adequately address?
4. Identify and briefly explain two ways in which the Reformers responded to the perceived lack of assurance of salvation in medieval Catholicism.
5. Describe a key difference in how Martin Luther and John Calvin approached theological articulation and organization.
6. Where was John Calvin born, and what academic discipline did he initially study before his conversion?
7. Explain Calvin's perspective on his departure from the Roman Catholic Church, contrasting it with the Catholic view.
8. What was the purpose of Calvin establishing the Geneva Academy, and what impact did it have on the spread of Reformation ideas?
9. Briefly describe Calvin's role in Geneva and the primary source of his influence within the city.

10. Summarize Calvin's principle of the "knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves" and why it was considered countercultural.

**Answer Key:**

1. The primary issue Luther addressed in his 95 Theses was the sale of indulgences, arguing against their theological basis and the economic exploitation of the poor. His initial intention was not to start a protest or reformation, but to invite theological debate among university scholars as was customary.
2. The printing press allowed Luther's ideas, including the 95 Theses, to be widely disseminated throughout Europe, reaching a large audience beyond the university. Additionally, Luther's challenge touched upon not only theological issues but also economic concerns and the welfare of the poor, resonating with a broader segment of society.
3. A core concern of the Reformers was the lack of assurance of salvation among believers in the medieval Roman Catholic world. They believed that the emphasis on works, penance, and purgatory left people in constant doubt about their eternal standing with God.
4. One way the Reformers responded was by emphasizing justification by faith alone, asserting that salvation is a free gift received through faith in Christ's finished work, providing immediate assurance. Another way was by preaching the perseverance of the saints, highlighting God's faithfulness in keeping believers secure in their redemption, not their own efforts.
5. Martin Luther was characterized as an extemporaneous and less organized preacher and writer, with his theological points sometimes scattered. In contrast, John Calvin was a meticulous student and lawyer by training, known for his careful word choice and systematic, organized approach to articulating theology.
6. John Calvin was born in Noyon, France, and he initially studied law at various universities before experiencing a sudden conversion to Protestantism in 1533.
7. Calvin believed that the Roman Catholic Church had strayed from the true biblical church. Therefore, his leaving was not an act of straying but a necessary step to remain faithful to the true church founded on Scripture. This contrasted with the Catholic view that Calvin had strayed from the one true church.
8. The Geneva Academy was established to educate and train individuals in Reformed theology. Its purpose was to create a center for theological learning

that would then send graduates to spread Reformation principles and biblical theology throughout Europe.

9. Calvin was not a political ruler in Geneva but held significant moral authority and influence as a biblical theologian, preacher, and teacher. His influence stemmed from his daily preaching, his writings, and his efforts to persuade the people of Geneva to live according to Scripture.
10. Calvin's principle suggests a cyclical relationship where the knowledge of God leads to a deeper understanding of oneself as a created being, and conversely, a greater awareness of one's own nature can illuminate aspects of God's character. It was countercultural because the prevailing trend in the world often involves seeking self-understanding independently of or even without any reference to God.

### **Essay Format Questions:**

1. Analyze the socio-economic and theological factors that contributed to the environment in which Martin Luther's challenge to indulgences sparked the Reformation.
2. Compare and contrast the approaches of Martin Luther and John Calvin in addressing the theological and practical concerns they had with the medieval Roman Catholic Church.
3. Evaluate the significance of the doctrine of assurance of salvation in the Reformation, explaining why it was a central point of contention and how the Reformers addressed it.
4. Discuss the ways in which John Calvin sought to shape the city of Geneva according to Reformation principles, considering both his successes and limitations.
5. Explore the enduring legacy of John Calvin's work, particularly his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, and its continued influence on Christian theology and practice.

## Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Indulgences:** Certificates issued by the Catholic Church, believed to reduce the temporal punishment for sins after confession and absolution.
- **Justification by Faith:** A central tenet of Protestantism asserting that a person is declared righteous in God's sight solely through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from works of the law.
- **Assurance of Salvation:** The conviction held by believers that they are indeed saved and will inherit eternal life with God.
- **Purgatory:** In Catholic doctrine, an intermediate state after death for purification of those who die in God's grace but still have unforgiven venial sins or have not done sufficient penance for sins already forgiven.
- **Perseverance of the Saints:** A theological doctrine, particularly in Calvinism, which teaches that all those who are truly chosen by God and regenerated by the Holy Spirit will be kept by God's power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives.
- **Sola Gratia:** Latin for "grace alone," one of the five *solas* of the Reformation, emphasizing that salvation is an unmerited gift from God.
- **95 Theses:** A list of ninety-five propositions for academic debate written by Martin Luther in 1517, primarily criticizing the sale of indulgences.
- **Printing Press:** An invention that allowed for the mass production of printed materials, playing a crucial role in disseminating Reformation ideas.
- **Excommunication:** The formal act by which a religious authority deprives a member of the rights of church membership and participation in the sacraments.
- **Humanism:** A cultural and intellectual movement of the Renaissance that emphasized human potential and achievement, often drawing inspiration from classical Greek and Roman culture.
- **Conversion:** A significant change in religious belief and commitment, often involving a personal encounter with God or a profound realization of religious truth.
- **Institutes of the Christian Religion:** John Calvin's magnum opus, a comprehensive systematic theology that became a foundational text for the Protestant Reformation.

- **Geneva Academy:** An institution of higher learning established in Geneva, Switzerland, during the Reformation, which served as a training center for Protestant pastors and theologians.
- **Systematizer of Theology:** An individual who organizes theological doctrines and beliefs into a coherent, logical, and comprehensive system.
- **Knowledge of God and Self:** A fundamental concept in Calvin's theology, highlighting the reciprocal relationship between understanding God's nature and recognizing humanity's created state and dependence on God.
- **Theocracy:** A system of government in which priests rule in the name of God or a deity, or in which the civil law is based on religious law.
- **Heretic:** A person whose religious beliefs differ from the officially accepted doctrines of a particular religion or church and are considered dangerous or false.

## 5. FAQs Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 4, Luther to Calvin, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: The Reformation and the Theology of Luther and Calvin

**1. What was the primary issue Martin Luther addressed in his 95 Theses, and what was the common misinterpretation of this event?** The primary issue Martin Luther addressed in his 95 Theses was the practice of selling indulgences by the Catholic Church, particularly to raise funds for Pope Leo X and the construction of St. Peter's Basilica. Luther challenged the theological underpinnings and the economic exploitation he perceived in this practice, defending the poor who were being taken advantage of. The common misinterpretation is that Luther's act of nailing the theses to the church door in Wittenberg was a bold act of protest initiating the Reformation. In reality, it was a customary practice for a theology professor to propose topics for academic discussion and debate at the university, which was closely associated with the church. Luther, at this point, was not intending to start a revolt against the Catholic Church but rather to engage in theological discourse.

**2. Beyond the theological arguments in Luther's challenge to indulgences, what other significant aspect was involved?** Beyond the theological arguments, Luther's challenge to indulgences also had a significant economic dimension. By questioning the legitimacy of indulgences, Luther was effectively threatening a major revenue stream for the Catholic Church, which Pope Leo X relied upon for his personal expenses and the funding of projects like St. Peter's Basilica. Furthermore, Luther's theses defended the poor, highlighting the economic burden the sale of indulgences placed on them. Thus, his actions posed not only a theological but also an economic and social challenge to the Church.

**3. What was the central concern of the Reformation regarding the spiritual lives of individuals, and how did the Reformers address it?** The central concern of the Reformation regarding the spiritual lives of individuals was the lack of assurance of salvation within the medieval Roman Catholic framework. People lived in constant anxiety about the punishment due for their sins, the possibility of unconfessed mortal sins leading to hell, and the potentially lengthy suffering in purgatory. The Reformers, like Luther and Calvin, addressed this lack of assurance by emphasizing that salvation and redemption are achieved through faith in the finished work of Christ alone, not through works or the sacraments. They preached that believers could have certainty of their eternal life based on scriptural promises, such as John 5:24, and the perseverance

of God in holding onto His saints, rather than the believer's ability to hold onto God. They also rejected the doctrine of purgatory, offering further relief and assurance to believers.

**4. What were the five key ways the Reformation responded to the lack of assurance prevalent in medieval Roman Catholicism?** The Reformation responded to the lack of assurance in several key ways: \* **Assurance of Redemption:** Emphasizing that believers are redeemed and can be sure of their redemption through faith in Christ's finished work (e.g., John 5:24). \* **Perseverance of the Saints:** Teaching that God perseveres in keeping believers redeemed, rather than it being solely dependent on the believer's efforts (e.g., John 10:28-29). \* **Witness of Redemption:** Encouraging believers to recognize and bear witness to their redeemed status. \* **Rejection of Purgatory:** Denying the existence of purgatory, thus eliminating a major source of anxiety about post-death suffering and uncertainty. \* **Justification by Grace:** Stressing that salvation is by God's grace alone, received through faith, which provided comfort and relieved the fear associated with earning salvation through works.

**5. How did John Calvin's personality and background differ from Martin Luther's, and why was this significant for the Reformation?** John Calvin and Martin Luther were contrasting figures in terms of personality and background. Calvin was a French scholar trained in law and humanism, known for his careful, organized, and systematic approach to theology, writing primarily in Latin and French. Luther, on the other hand, was a more spontaneous German preacher, less meticulous in his language, and whose theological expressions were often more scattered. This difference is significant because God used two individuals with such distinct strengths to launch and develop the Reformation. Luther's initial passionate break and emphasis on faith were complemented by Calvin's systematic articulation and organization of Reformed theology, as well as his efforts to mediate disputes and build a model Reformation community in Geneva.

**6. What was John Calvin's understanding of his departure from the Roman Catholic Church, and how did it differ from the Catholic perspective?** John Calvin viewed his departure from the Roman Catholic Church not as straying from the true church, but as a necessary step to remain within the true biblical church. He believed that the Roman Catholic Church had deviated from biblical teachings and practices. Therefore, in his perspective, he was leaving a church that had strayed. This contrasts sharply with the Roman Catholic perspective, which viewed Calvin's departure as a straying away from the one true church, where he, as a believer, should have remained.

**7. What were some of the key aspects of John Calvin's work in the Reformation beyond his theological writings?**

Beyond his extensive theological writings, John Calvin played several crucial roles in the Reformation: \* **Mediator:** He actively worked to settle theological differences and foster unity among Reformation leaders. \* **Builder of a Model City:** He aimed to establish Geneva as a model "city of God on a hill," demonstrating Reformation principles in civic and religious life, though he held no formal political power. \* **Founder of the Geneva Academy:** He established this academy to educate and train individuals in Reformed theology, who then spread these teachings throughout Europe. \* **Systematizer of Theology:** He brilliantly organized and systematized Reformation theology, providing a coherent framework that was influential for centuries. \* **Developer of Theological Principles:** He articulated fundamental principles for approaching and understanding theology, such as the interconnected knowledge of God and self.

**8. What was John Calvin's role in the burning of Michael Servaitis in Geneva, and why was Servaitis executed?**

John Calvin did not order or carry out the burning of Michael Servaitis. Servaitis, who held Unitarian beliefs denying the Trinity, was deemed a heretic by the city council of Geneva. Calvin actually advised Servaitis not to come to Geneva, anticipating the danger. While Calvin engaged in theological disputes with Servaitis and believed his views to be heretical, the decision and action of executing Servaitis by burning at the stake was made by the Geneva city council. Their primary motivation was to maintain social order, as heresy was seen as a threat to the stability of society, not solely to uphold correct theology as defined by Calvin.