

## **BEREA BAPTIST CHURCH**

Email: [bereabaptist@gmail.com](mailto:bereabaptist@gmail.com); Website: [www.bereabaptistuganda.org](http://www.bereabaptistuganda.org)

### **The Protestant Reformation Series**

#### **A great price: Can you willingly pay it? A Synopsis of John Calvin**

The Protestant Reformers lived and served as though they were under death sentence. And God has ordained that his instruments serve Him through fire and be content in God while suffering. It is obvious that in John Calvin's times there was a greater and more immediate awareness of death than there is today. This meant that Christian spirituality was more markedly shaped by death. He lived with a constant and acute awareness of the vulnerability of the human condition.

Calvin was also a refugee. He had of course fled from his beloved France. From 1534 in his mid-twenties, Calvin could never return and felt the loss acutely. He was not only an unwilling refugee, he was also an unwilling settler. There were the sheer demands of his ministry. The ordinary duties of Calvin's ministry were strange by any normal measure. He preached an average of 170 sermons each year besides writing, weddings and baptisms. If a man was ever hemmed in by sheer activity, it was John Calvin.

Calvin suffered from ill health. Throughout his life he had terrible migraines; he had pleurisy and room-bound in 1558 for several months; in 1559 he could hardly speak and spat blood; he suffered also from hemorrhoids, gout, and in later years, kidney stones. In sum then, Calvin was often ill; he lived through the death of his son and his wife; he was opposed by natives and strangers to Geneva alike; at the start his colleagues were incompetent; he had an extraordinary workload, and he lived under shadow of death. On every front he was a man hedged in.

We must remember that we will suffer because we are one with the Lord Jesus Christ. And we should pray that as fear occupies part of our hearts, hope will reign. Following Christ must cost us everything else. As today's reformers if we are not satisfied in God through suffering, then God will not be glorified, Christ will not be honored, the church will remain frail in an escapist world of ease, and the completion of the Great Commission with its demand for martyrdom will fail.