

Dear Friends of the Foundation:

I have recently returned from a delightful visit with our west coast, southern California ministerial study **seminar**, led by Jan Farley. They were reading on eschatology and engaging in rigorous and critical discussions.

The week before that I attended the **Thirteenth Biennial Calvin Colloquium** at Erskine Theological Seminary in Due West, South Carolina. It was good to see many of our directors there and to hear one of them, Charles Raynal, give a great paper on **“John Leith as a Teacher of Calvin’s Theology”** at the banquet on Friday evening.

John Calvin, in his **Institutes of the Christian Religion**, writes the following about the fourth petition of the **Lord’s Prayer**, “Give us this day our daily bread”:

By this petition we ask of God all things in general that our bodies have need to use under the elements of this world, not only for food and clothing but also for everything God perceives to be beneficial to us, that we may eat our daily bread in peace. Briefly, by this we give ourselves over to his care, and entrust ourselves to his providence, that he may feed, nourish, and preserve us. For our most gracious Father does not disdain to take even our bodies under his safekeeping and guardianship in order to exercise our faith in these small matters, while we expect everything from him, even to a crumb of bread and a drop of water. For since it has come about in some way or other through our wickedness that we are affected and tormented with greater concern for body than for soul, many who venture to entrust the soul to God are still troubled about the flesh, still worry about what they shall eat, what they shall wear, and unless they have on hand abundance of wine, grain, and oil, tremble with apprehension. So much more does the shadow of this fleeting life mean to us than that everlasting immortality. Those who, relying upon God, have once for all cast out that anxiety about the care of the flesh, immediately expect from him greater things, even salvation and eternal life. It is, then, no light exercise of faith for us to hope for those things from God which otherwise cause us such anxiety. And we benefit greatly when we put off this faithlessness, which clings to the very bones of almost all men.

John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. from the 1559 Latin ed. by Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols., in *Library of Christian Classics*, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), cited by book, chapter, section, and, in parentheses, volume and page, 3.20.44 (2:908).

So let us “give ourselves over to his care, and entrust ourselves to his providence.” How wonderful it is!

Grace and Peace,

Jim

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