

**Interlinear Book 1, Chapter 1 of Calvin's *Institutes*
compiled by Nathan Bierma
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1559 Latin

1560 French

1561 English (Norton) [needed]

1813 English (Allen)

1845 English (Beveridge)

1960 English (Battles)

1987 English (Lane abridgment)

2008 English (Bell paraphrase)

full references at end

Tota fere sapientiae nostrae summa, quae vera demum ac solida sapientia censi debeat, duabus partibus constat, Dei cognitione et nostri.

Toute la somme presque de nostre sagesse, laquelle, tout conter, merite d'estre reputée vraye et entiere sagesse, est située en deux parties: c'est qu'en cognoissant Dieu, chacun de nous aussi se cognoisse.

True and substantial wisdom principally consists of two parts, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves.

Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid Wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.

Nearly all wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.

Our wisdom, if it is to be thought genuine, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.

Almost all the things we know—the good things, the true things—center on two kinds of knowledge: What we know about God, and what we know about ourselves.

Caeterum, quum multis inter se vinculis connexae sitit, utra tamen alteram praecedat, et ex se pariat, non facile est discernere.

Au reste, combien qu'elles soyent unies l'une l'autre par beaucoup de liens, si n'est-il pas toutesfois aisé discerner laquelle va devant et produit l'autre.

But, while these two branches of knowledge are so intimately connected, which of them precedes and produces the other, is not easy to discover.

But as these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes and gives birth to the other.

But, while joined by many bonds, which one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern.

As these are closely connected, it is not easy to decide which comes first and gives rise to the other.

There's a lot of common ground between the two, and it's difficult at first glance to say which one comes first.

Nam primo se nemo aspicere potest quin ad Dei, in quo vivit et movetur, intuitum sensus suos protinus convertat: quia minime obscurum est dotes quibus pollemus nequaquam a nobis esse, imo ne id quidem ipsum quod sumus, aliud esse quam in uno Deo subsistentiam.

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Car en premier lieu, nul ne se peut contempler, qu'incontinent il ne tourne ses sens au regard de Dieu, auquel il vit et a sa vigueur: pource qu'il n'est pas obscur que les dons ou gist toute nostre dignité ne sont nullement de nous: mesmes que noz forces et fermeté ne sont autre chose que de subsister et estre appuyez en Dieu.

For, in the first place, no man can take a survey of himself but he must immediately turn to the contemplation of God, in whom he 'lives and moves;' (Acts xvii. 28) since it is evident that the talents which we possess are not from ourselves, and that our very existence is nothing but a subsistence in God alone.

For, in the first place, no man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves; because it is perfectly obvious, that the endowments which we possess cannot possibly be from ourselves; nay, that our very being is nothing else than subsistence in God alone.

In the first place, no one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God, in whom he "lives and moves" (Acts 17:28).

For, quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves; indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God.

To begin with, no one can assess himself without turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves, because it is quite obvious that the gifts we possess cannot possibly spring from ourselves and our very being is sustained by God alone.

On one hand, I'd like to start by suggesting that we can't think about ourselves without also thinking about God—in whom the book of Acts says we "live and move." Obviously, all the life and movement we're born with don't come from us – in fact, there's *nothing* about us that doesn't fully depend on God.

Deinde ab his bonis quae guttatim e coelo ad nos stillant, tanquam a rivulis ad fontem deducimur.

Davantage, par les biens qui distillent du ciel sur nous goutte à goutte, nous sommes conduits comme par petits ruisseaux a la fontaine.

These bounties, distilling to us by drops from heaven, form, as it were, so many streams conducting us to the fountain-head.

In the second place, those blessings which unceasingly distil to us from heaven, are like streams conducting us to the fountain.

Then, by these benefits shed like dew from heaven upon us, we are led as by rivulets to the spring itself.

Further, the blessings which constantly spill over from heaven are like streams leading us to the fountain.

We're like small streams of water that flow out of the mighty river of God.

Iam vero ex nostra tenuitate melius apparet illa, quae in Deo residet bonorum infinitas.

Pareillement de ceste petite et maigro portion, l'infinité de tous biens qui reside en Dieu apparoist tant mieux: Our poverty conduces to a clearer display of the infinite fullness of God.

Here, again, the infinitude of good which resides in God becomes more apparent from our poverty.

Indeed, our very poverty better discloses the infinitude of benefits reposing in God. Here again, the endless good which exists in God becomes more obvious beside our poverty.

Doesn't the poverty of our sinful condition make the rich goodness of God all the more apparent?

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Praesertim miserabilis haec ruina, in quam nos deiecit primi hominis defectio, sursum oculos cogit attollere, non modo ut inde ieiuni et famelici petamus quod nobis deest, sed metu expergefacti humilitatem discamus.

singulierement ceste mal-heureuse ruine en laquelle nous sommes trebuschez par la revolte du premier homme, nous contraint de lever les yeux en haut, non seulement pour desirer de la les biens qui nous defaillent, comme povres gens vuides et affamez, mais aussi pour estre esveillez de crainte, et par ce moyen apprendre que c'est d'humilité.

Especially the miserable ruin, into which we have been plunged by the defection of the first man, compels us to raise our eyes towards heaven, not only as hungry and famishes, to seek thence a supply for our wants, but, aroused with fear, to learn humility.

In particular, the miserable ruin into which the revolt of the first man has plunged us, compels us to turn our eyes upwards; not only that while hungry and famishing we may thence ask what we want, but being aroused by fear may learn humility.

The miserable ruin, into which the rebellion of the first man cast us, especially compels us to look upward. Thus, not only will we, in fasting and hungering, seek thence what we lack; but, in being aroused by fear, we shall learn humility.

Most of all the sad ruin into which man's first rebellion plunged us compels us to turn our eyes upwards, not only that in our desperate need we may ask for what we want, but also that in fear we may learn humility.

Our sinful condition—which started with Adam and continues in all of us to this day—makes our eyes want to stay wide open, searching for God. We search for God's sustenance when we're hungry, and when we realize just how much he provides for us, we can't help but be humbled.

Nam ut in homine reperitur quidam miseriarum omnium mundus, ac ex quo spoliati sumus divino ornatu, pudenda nuditas immensam probrorum congeriem detegit, propriae infelicitatis conscientia unumquemque pungi necesse est, ut in aliquam saltem Dei notitiam veniat.

Car comme on trouve en l'homme un monde de toutes miseres, depuis que nous avons esté despouillez des ornemens du ciel, nostre nudité descouvre avec grand honte un si grand tas de tout opprobre, que nous en sommes tous confus: d'autre

costé, il est necessaire que la conscience nous poigne en particulier de nostre mal-heureté : pour approcher au moins a quelque cognoissance de Dieu.

For, since man is subject to a world of miseries, and has been spoiled of his divine array, this melancholy exposure discovers an immense mass of deformity: exvery one, therefore, must be so impressed with a consciousness of his own infelicity, as to arrive at some knowledge of God.

For as there exists in man something like a world of misery, and ever since we were stript of the divine attire our naked shame discloses an immense series of disgraceful properties every man, being stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness, in this way necessarily obtains at least some knowledge of God.

For, as a veritable world of miseries is to be found in mankind, and we are thereby despoiled of divine raiment, our shameful nakedness exposes a teeming horde of infamies. Each of us must, then, be so stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness as to attain at least some knowledge of God.

Because man is so full of misery and ever since the Fall has exhibited such a catalogue of blatant sin, everyone who is stung by the awareness of his own unhappiness gains at least some knowledge of God.

It's almost as if, without God, we're trapped in a world of misery. We feel naked without the clothing of God's righteousness, and *everybody* at one point or another feels the shame of this nakedness. This shame means that everybody knows at least one thing about God: We're missing something in life without him.

Ita ex ignorantiae, vanitatis, inopiae, infirmitatis, pravitatis denique et corruptionis propriae sensu recognoscimus, non alibi quam in Domino sitam esse veram sapientiae lucem, solidam virtutem, bonorum omnium perfectam affluentiam, iustitiae puritatem,

Parquoy du sentiment de nostre ignorance, vanité, disette, infirmité, voire, qui plus est, perversité et corruption, nous sommes induits a cognoistre qu'il n'y a nulle part ailleurs qu'en Dieu vraye clarté de sagesse, ferme vertu, droite affluence de tous biens, pureté de iustice,

Thus a sense of our ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, depravity, and corruption, leads us to perceive and acknowledge that in the Lord alone are to be found true wisdom, solid strength, perfect goodness, and unspotted righteousness;

Thus, our feeling of ignorance, vanity, want, weakness, in short, depravity and corruption, reminds us, that in the Lord, and none but He, dwell the true light of wisdom, solid virtue, exuberant goodness.

Thus, from the feeling of our own ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, and—what is more—depravity and corruption, we recognize that the true light of wisdom, sound virtue, full abundance of every good, and purity of righteousness rest in the Lord alone.

So our feelings of ignorance, vanity, need, weakness and general depravity remind us that in the Lord, and no one else, can be found the true light of wisdom, solid virtue and overflowing goodness.

In short, our shames, our failures—all of our sin—reminds us that in the river of God, and in him alone, do we find all the wisdom, truth, and goodness that our soul thirsts for.

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atque adeo malis nostris ad considerata Dei bona excitamur; nec ante ad illum serio aspirare possumus, quam coeperimus nobis ipsis displicere.

tant y a que nous sommes esmeus par noz misereres a considerer les biens de Dieu: et ne pouvons aspirer et tendre a luy a bon escient, qu'ayant commencé a nous esplaire du tout.

and so, by our imperfections, we are excited to a consideration of the perfections of God. Nor can we really aspire toward him, till we have begun to be displeased with ourselves.

We are accordingly urged by our own evil things to consider the good things of God; and, indeed, we cannot aspire to Him in earnest until we have begun to be displeased with ourselves.

To this extent we are prompted by our own ills to contemplate the good things of God; and we cannot seriously aspire to him before we begin to become displeased with ourselves.

Our evil ways make us think of all the good things of God. We can never really seek him in earnest until we begin to despair of ourselves.

In other words, our sin actually makes us want to know about God's goodness more! We won't want to *really* know more about God until we realize just how bad of a shape we're really in.

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Quis enim nominum non libenter in se requiescat? Quis etiam non requiescit quamdiu sibi est incognitus, hoc est, suis dotibus est contentus, et inscius suae miseriae vel immemor?

Car qui sera l'homme qui ne prenne plaisir a se reposer en soy, et mesmes qui de fait n'y repose pendant qu'il ne se cognoist point: assavoir quand il se glorifie és dons de Dieu, comme en riches et nobles paremens, ignorant sa misere, ou l'ayant mise en oubli?

For who would not gladly rest satisfied with himself? where is the man not actually absorbed in self-complacency, while he remains unacquainted with his true situation, or content with his own endowments, and ignorant or forgetful of his own misery?

For what man is not disposed to rest in himself? Who, in fact, does not thus rest, so long as he is unknown to himself; that is, so long as he is contented with his own endowments, and unconscious or unmindful of his misery?

For what man in all the world would not gladly remain as he is—what man does not remain as he is—so long as he does not know himself, that is, while content with his own gifts, and either ignorant or unmindful of his own misery?

Don't we all rely on our own strength when we are not aware of our real nature and are quite content with our own gifts, ignoring our misery?

Why would you care about fixing something that you didn't know was broken? Well, the truth is that *we* are what is broken—but because we're often too ignorant to realize it, we remain content with how we are and don't go looking for a fix.

Proinde unusquisque sui agnitione non tantum instigatur ad quaerendum Deum, sed etiam ad reperiendum quasi manu ducitur.

Parquoy la cognoissance de nous-mesmes non seulement aiguillonné chacun a cognoistre Dieu, mais aussi doit estre mené par icelle comme par la main a le trouver.

The knowledge of ourselves, therefore, is not only an incitement to seek after God, but likewise a considerable assistance towards finding him.

Every person, therefore, on coming to the knowledge of himself, is not only urged to seek God, but is also led as by the hand to find him.

Accordingly, the knowledge of ourselves not only arouses us to seek God, but also, as it were, leads us by the hand to find him.

When we do come to ourselves, we are spurred on to seek God and are led by his hand to find him.

Therefore, [to answer the question about whether knowledge of God or ourselves comes first, we can say this:] When we come to really know ourselves [and recognize that we're naked, thirst, and broken], we're naturally led to want to know more about God. In other words, the knowledge we have about ourselves takes us by the hand and leads us down the path of wanting to know more about God also.

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