

PART II

God's Word and God's Spirit

11th Reading: Pages 41-45

Write notes on the following:

1. How do people, generally speaking, regard the Bible?
2. How do Christians think of the Bible? On a scale of 1 to 10, is the Bible perceived as an ancient book [1-2], a valuable book for study [3-4], a keepsake [5-6], a book that contains truth [7-8], or the book from God that is the absolute truth [9-10]?
3. Why do true Christians receive and believe the Bible as the absolute Word of God? Is it because of the beauty of the text, the cleverness of its message, the history of its writing and preservation, or its impressive argument? Is there another way or reason?
4. The Scripture does not stoop to the assessment or opinion of man. Why is this such an important starting point for understanding all of God's truth and having the right attitude toward Him?
5. Where is our assurance and comfort in this?

NOTE: The day in which John Calvin lived saw the Roman Catholic church as a very dominant cultural player. Its view of authority put the Holy Scriptures *under* that of the church. It taught that men were not able to understand what the Bible said unless the church told them. Under Roman Catholicism people were discouraged from reading God's Word. Calvin spoke against that error.

A major point of the Reformers, Luther, Calvin and many others, was that the Bible's message is *perspicuous*, that is plainly evident, and that men were able to understand it with, or without, official church dictates.

Another important point of the Reformers was that the authority of the Holy Scriptures was a matter of faith in God. The Bible speaks for itself. No earthly or ecclesiastical authority is competent to declare it to be or not to be the Word of God.

Administer Test 5

Note: Chapter 8 omitted

Chapter 9 **All the principles of godliness are undermined by fanatics who substitute revelations for Scripture.**

In his day, Calvin needed to speak against those who claimed to receive special revelations from God and who felt it necessary to publish them within the church. His point is still valid today. God's revelation is full and complete. Nothing should be added or taken away.