

Vasyl Lavreniuk,

Postgraduate Student at the Department
of Philosophy and Political Science

Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University

ORCID: 0000-0002-1765-8162

lavrenukvasil8@gmail.com

SOTERIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS IN THE TEACHINGS OF REFORMATION THEOLOGIANS

The article examines the main provisions of the soteriological doctrine of Calvinism as part of the Protestant dogmatic theology of redemption and human salvation. It was established that representatives of early Protestantism in anthropological teaching emphasized the soteriological aspect through a radical rethinking of the meaning of earthly existence, when a person must constantly improve himself and solve earthly problems through serving God. The starting position of the soteriological doctrine of Calvinism was the problem of "justification by faith", "predestination to salvation" and "double predestination", which were understood through the prism of the history of human existence – departure from God and return to Him. It has been established that the main provisions of soteriology were laid down in J. Calvin's work "Instructions in the Christian Faith", which was used to understand his relationship to salvation. The book examines predestination in the form of the concepts about providence and predestination that have become the basis of deterministic theology. The connection between a person's salvation and faith in Christ's redemptive sacrifice, which is provided in the form of God's grace, deprives a person of free will, since salvation is predetermined by God, is established. Man was created to glorify and contemplate the creation of God, but because of the violation of this instruction, death became a reality and all creation came under its power. The main consequence of the fall is that people have lost the purpose for which they were created. It is substantiated that faith as the main element of salvation is received only by the chosen people, whose name is entered in the "Book of Life". It is stated that the soteriological concept of the Reformation was criticized by Lutheranism and Zwinlianism because of the powerlessness of man in his own salvation and the opposition of faith in Christ's redemptive sacrifice with faith in his election by God. The further ways of the development of John Calvin's soteriological concepts and their impact on the political, social and religious situation in Europe at that time are studied.

Key words: *theology, Reformation, Calvinism, Lutheranism, soteriology, justification, predestination, salvation, righteousness.*

Vasyl Lavreniuk. Konceptje soteriologiczne w nauczaniu teologów reformacji

Artykuł analizuje główne postanowienia soteriologicznej doktryny kalwinizmu jako części protestanckiej teologii dogmatycznej o odkupieniu i zbawieniu człowieka. Ustalono, że przedstawiciele wczesnego protestantyzmu w nauczaniu antropologicznym kładli nacisk na aspekt soteriologiczny poprzez radykalne przemyślenie sensu ziemskiej egzystencji, kiedy to człowiek musi nieustannie się doskonalić i rozwiązywać ziemskie problemy poprzez służbę Bogu.

Pozycją wyjściową soteriologicznej doktryny kalwinizmu był problem „usprawiedliwienia przez wiarę”, „predestynacji do zbawienia” i „podwójnej predestynacji”, które rozumiane były przez pryzmat historii ludzkiej egzystencji – odejścia od Boga i powrotu do Niego. Ustalono, że główne

założenia soteriologii zostały określone w dziele J. Kalwina „Pouczenia o wierze chrześcijańskiej”, które wykorzystano do zrozumienia jego stosunku do zbawienia. Książka analizuje predestynację w postaci koncepcji opatrności i predestynacji, które stały się podstawą teologii deterministycznej.

Związek między zbawieniem człowieka a wiarą w odkupieńczą ofiarę Chrystusa, która jest zapewniona w postaci łaski Bożej, pozbawia człowieka wolnej woli, ponieważ zbawienie jest z góry ustalone przez Boga. Człowiek został stworzony, aby wychwalać i kontemplować stworzenie Boga, ale z powodu naruszenia tej instrukcji śmierć stała się rzeczywistością, a całe stworzenie znalazło się pod jej mocą. Główną konsekwencją upadku jest to, że ludzie utracili cel, dla którego zostali stworzeni. Udowodniono, że wiara jako główny element zbawienia jest przyjmowana tylko przez naród wybrany, którego imię zapisane jest w „Księdze Życia”. Stwierdzono, że soteriologiczna koncepcja Reformacji była krytykowana przez luteranizm i zwinlianizm ze względu na niemoc człowieka we własnym zbawieniu i przeciwstawienie wiary w odkupieńczą ofiarę Chrystusa z wiarą w Jego wybranie przez Boga. Badane są dalsze drogi rozwoju koncepcji soteriologicznych Jana Kalwina i ich wpływ na sytuację polityczną, społeczną i religijną ówczesnej Europy.

Słowa kluczowe: teologia, reformacja, kalwinizm, luteranizm, soteriologia, usprawiedliwienie, predestynacja, zbawienie, sprawiedliwość.

Василь Лавренюк. Сотеріологічні концепції у вченнях реформаторських богословів

У статті досліджено основні положення сотеріологічної доктрини кальвінізму як частину протестантської догматичної теології про спокуту та спасіння людини.

Установлено, що представники раннього протестантизму в антропологічному вченні акцентували увагу на сотеріологічному аспекті через кардинальне переосмислення сенсу земного буття, коли людина мусить постійно самовдосконалюватися й вирішувати земні проблеми через служіння Богу. Вихідною позицією сотеріологічної доктрини кальвінізму була проблема «виправдання вірою», «передвизначення до спасіння» та «подвійного передвизначення», які осмислювалися крізь призму історії людського буття – відходження від Бога й повернення до Нього. Константовано, що основні положення сотеріології були закладені в праці Ж. Кальвіна «Настанови в християнській вірі», якою послуговувалися для осмислення його ставлення до спасіння. У книзі передвизначення розглядається у формі концепції про провидіння та предестинацію, котрі стали основою детерміністичного богослов'я. Виявлено зв'язок між спасінням людини з вірою у викупну жертву Христа, яка надається у формі Божої благодаті, позбавляє людину свободи волі, оскільки спасіння передвизначене Богом. Людина була створена, щоб прославляти й споглядати творіння Бога, однак через порушення цієї настанови, смерть стала реальністю й усі творіння опинилися під її владою. Основним наслідком гріхопадіння є те, що люди втратили мету, заради якої були створені. Обґрунтовано, що віру як основний елемент спасіння отримують лише вибрані люди, ім'я котрих занесено в «Книгу Життя». Константовано, що сотеріологічна концепція реформаторства зазнавала критики лютеранства й цвинліанства через безсилля людини у власному спасінні та протиставлення віри у викупну жертву Христа з вірою у свою обраність Богом. Досліджено подальші шляхи розвитку сотеріологічних концепцій Жана Кальвіна та їх вплив на тогочасну політичну, соціальну та релігійну ситуацію в Європі.

Ключові слова: теологія, Реформація, кальвінізм, лютеранство, сотеріологія, виправдання, передвизначення, спасіння, праведність.

Formulation of the problem. The philosophical discourse of modern Ukraine should be carried out primarily by Ukrainian philosophers, but this discourse includes all the latest developments in modern philosophy – American, German, French and so on. Ukrainian philosophers receive these works on the basis of existing Ukrainian philosophy, its dictionary (Ukrainian philosophical language), its methodology (Ukrainian philosophical schools), its values (which it shares with Ukrainian literature, Ukrainian art, Ukrainian history, etc.), and only then rethought by Ukrainian philosophers, the achievements of modern world philosophy are applied to the reflection of Ukrainian local issues. Two important factors are of great help: first, the common knowledge and value base

that Ukrainian philosophy has with all modern philosophy – thanks to **Formulation of the problem**. The key tenets of Martin Luther's soteriological doctrine were reflected in the systematized theological teachings of the first Protestant currents. However, the very process of "reformation" of the theological ideas of Christianity did not stand still. Following Luther, John Calvin, theologian and great reformer, occupies an important place in the formation of new doctrinal concepts.

The study of the soteriological concepts of Calvinism necessarily involves the analysis of John Calvin's life path and the social, political and economic factors that had an impact on the contemporary society, philosophical and religious ideas. Characterizing the entire basis of the theological doctrines of Calvinism, we consider soteriological concepts as the main component necessary for a complete understanding of the phenomenon of the Reformation and the search for "salvation".

Analysis of recent research and publications. In the discourse of religious studies, the progress and transformation of the soteriological ideas of Calvinism is developed quite shallowly, therefore there is a rather meager scientific heritage on the outlined subject. During a careful analysis of the scientific works of domestic and foreign specialists in religious studies, it was found that scientific research in this issue was carried out tangentially, namely during scientific research from other branches of theology, for example, eschatology or Christology.

The soteriological ideas of Calvinism became the subject of tangential analysis in the works of such domestic scientists as A. Kolodny, O. Sokolovsky, V. Dokash, O. Shepetyak, S. Golovashchenko, M. Babii and others. The most important for a comprehensive and thorough scientific study of all aspects of the formation and further development of the soteriological concepts of Calvin and his successors is the analysis of the main theological works of these reformers, namely the foundational work of John Calvin "Instructions in the Christian Faith". Also, it is important to study the works of the Fathers of the Church, namely St. Augustine, whose ideas were the foundation for the emergence of reformist concepts.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the essential aspects of the formation and subsequent transformations of the main soteriological ideas of Calvinism, to study the main trends in the development of dogmatic concepts and to highlight the main cause-and-effect relationships in the formation of soteriological dogmas.

Presenting main material. Calvinism is the second in terms of importance and time of formation of the current of Protestantism, which arose in the 16th century in Switzerland as a result of the Reformation. For the first time, this current received the name "Calvinism" in 1552 from its opponents, representatives of the Lutheran teaching, and not from the Roman Catholic Church, which traditionally named heresies after of their founder. Jean Calvin considered such a name inappropriate to the essence of the doctrine. Calvin believed that they cannot give us a greater offense than the word "Calvinism". Therefore, the representatives of this trend preferred such names as "Reformation Protestantism" or "Reformation Christianity".

Calvinist theology has gone through quite a long path of transformations and development of dogmatic concepts. Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Butzer, Wolfgang Capito, John Ecolampadius, and Guillaume Farel are among the first generation of Reformation theologians. Each of them, having a completely different academic education, came to the same ideas and key themes of Reformed theology in their works. It is worth noting that they paid special attention to the Holy Scriptures as the dominant source of authority in all theological matters. Also, the reformer theologians considered the Holy Scriptures as a single whole in their writings. This, in turn, led to the fact that the Sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament of the Eucharist came to be considered the only visible signs of the descent of God's Grace on a believer. Another problem in which the reformers had a common opinion was the denial of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ during the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Each of them in their works promoted soteriological concepts according to which salvation is possible only by the Grace of God, as well as the doctrine of "predestination to salvation", that is, about the election of certain people to salvation by God and vice versa. The great reformer Martin Luther and his ideological successor Philip Melanchthon had a huge ideological influence on these reforming

theologians, as well as on their followers. The soteriological concept of "justification by faith alone", better known as *sola fide* [1], is a direct inheritance from the theological achievements of Martin Luther.

In the future, such famous theologians as Jean Calvin, Heinrich Bullinger, Wolfgang Musculus, Peter Martyr Vermilli and Andreas Hyperius (Hyperius) are considered ideological successors, or, so to speak, the second generation of reformer theologians. John Calvin's theological work entitled "Instructions in the Christian Faith", which was written between 1536 and 1539, gained enormous popularity and became one of the most influential books of that era. Already by the middle of the 16th century, the existing theological concepts were united into a single whole, into one creed consistent in its ideas, which in the future would determine the entire essence of the reformation teaching. The Consensus Tigurinus or Zurich Consensus of 1549, a document intended to unify Protestants on the doctrines of the Sacraments, was an important step in the development of the theological dogmas of the Creed. Thanks to him, there was a union at the ideological level of the memorialistic theology of Ulrich Zwingli and Heinrich Bullinger, according to which the Sacrament is only a reminder to believers about the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, with the soteriological concept of John Calvin, where the Sacrament is a way of receiving grace with actual presence Jesus Christ spiritually, not physically, as in Catholic doctrine [2, p. 215]. Therefore, the signing of this theological document led to the fact that the early Reformation theology became coherent in its doctrinal ideas, despite the diversity of some concepts, and also gave stability to the development of the doctrine, which had a positive effect on its spread throughout Europe. In turn, this positively distinguishes Calvinism from Lutheranism, which suffered from constant theological disputes that did not subside until the signing of the "Formula of Concord" in 1579.

The missionary work of John Calvin in the Europe of that time had a great influence on the spread and development of the creed. Thanks to the active educational activities of the great theologian in France, the reformed creed was widely spread in the French-speaking territories, namely in the provinces of the Netherlands. The introduction of Calvinism as the main religion in the Electorate of the Palatinate by its ruler Frederick III the Pious led to the formulation of the Heidelberg Catechism (sometimes the Palatinate Catechism) in 1563, a component of the Three Forms of Unity, the official statement of the Calvinist creed [3]. This catechism and the Belgian Confession, a doctrinal creed written by Guido de Bres and concluded in 1559, were adopted as confessional standards at the Synod of Emden, the first in the history of the Dutch Reformed Church, in 1571.

In 1573, William I of Orange (the Silent), the first of the hereditary rulers (state governors) of the Netherlands, joined the Calvinist Church. In 1560, Jeanne III (Jeanne Albre), the then ruler of the Kingdom of Navarre, converted to Calvinism, which later led to the adoption of this creed as the official religion in the kingdom. At the same time, leading Reformed theologians, Calvinists and simple supporters of this creed began to move en masse and settle in England. Such representatives of the Reformation included Martin Butzer, Peter the Martyr of Vermilii and John Lasky (the younger) in England, and John Knox in Scotland. In this way, Presbyterianism was formed in these territories - one of the branches of the Reformed Church, which in its dogmatics is based on the theological ideas of John Calvin. During the First Civil War in England, Scottish (1647) and English (1648) Presbyterians adopted the Westminster Confession – a short set of Calvinist religious doctrine, which later became the confessional standard in all English-speaking reformed churches of the world [4]. Having become a powerful force in Europe, the Calvinist faith continued to spread in other territories, in particular, in the territories of North America, South Africa and even Korea.

Supporters of Reformed theology hold the opinion that the only source of information about God and His essence can be only God's Word. Believers can know absolutely nothing about God, except what God Himself gives to humanity through Revelation. Any dispute about anything that has not been revealed or explained by God through His Word is not justified in His sight. Humanity's knowledge of God and His nature is radically different from the idea they have of anything else. This is due to the fact that God is infinite, eternal, and man is limited in his knowledge and existence, so

he is simply unable to understand the infinity of being. Although the knowledge that God reveals to mankind can never be wrong or erroneous, it is also never all-encompassing.

Despite the rather complicated path of development and transformations, the Reformation tradition in its majority did not change the medieval consensus in matters of teaching about the essence of God. In general, the essence of God is described by three main characteristics, namely eternal, infinite and unchanging. The theologians belonging to the Reformed tradition believe that instead of considering God based on his attributes, characteristics and ability to do whatever he wants, the doctrinal teaching about God should be based on his works in human history, the way he lives with people and ability to endow them with various graces. Also, it is worth noting that the reformist theologians of the medieval tradition in matters related to the doctrine of the Trinity, the dogmatic base of which rests on the First Church Councils in Nicaea and Chalcedon. According to this teaching, God is affirmed as the only God in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the Son (Jesus Christ) is considered eternally born of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, which is an eternal attribute of God the Father and God the Son.

If we look at this creed from a Christological point of view, the Reformed theologians adhere to the historically established dogma that Jesus Christ is a single eternal person who has both divine and human nature. Supporters of the Reformation tradition believe that Jesus Christ became a man so that mankind could be saved. It is interesting that the human nature of Christ was one of the main confrontational dogmas in the disputes between the Reformed and Lutheran Christology. Starting from the established belief that human nature is limited, which in turn leads to man's inability to comprehend the infinite divinity, Reformed theologians conclude that the human body of Jesus Christ is simply not capable of being in several places at the same time. In turn, supporters of Lutheranism believe that Christ is physically present during the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and from this it follows that Jesus Christ is physically present in many places at the same time [5, p. 312–313].

The foundation of the soteriological concept of Calvinism can be considered five positive statements on controversial dogmatic issues, or as they are also called – TULIP ("tulip"), the foundation of which was formed by Calvin, and finally approved by orthodox Calvinists after his death. These principles include: Total depravity – complete sinfulness of a person; Unconditional election – God's unconditional election of a person for salvation; Limited atonement – limited salvation by Christ of only the elect; Irresistible grace – undeniable endowment of a person with grace for salvation forever; Perseverance of the saints – election to salvation cannot be lost. These principles remain fundamental for the Protestant trend to our time [6, p. 221].

In the Christian dogmatic tradition, humanity was created in the image of God, but corrupted by sin, which in turn makes them imperfect and selfish. Representatives of the Reformation tradition in this matter are supporters of St. Augustine. The Father of the Church believed that the corruption of human nature was due to the sin of Adam and Eve, which would later become the concept of "original sin". Although other early Christian theologians believed that through original sin humanity inherited the problems of physical mortality, moral weakness, and propensity for sinfulness, St. Augustine was the first author who believed that the concept of "inherited guilt" (reatus) from Adam should be added to this list. According to this concept, every newborn is already cursed with sinfulness, and humanity is deprived of any ability to respond to God. Reformed theologians especially highlight the fact that this sinfulness thus affects the whole of human nature, including its will.

From the point of view of soteriology, the most important work of John Calvin is "Instructions in the Christian Faith" (it is also known under the names "Institutes of the Christian Faith", "Christian Institutions"). This work was first published in Latin in March 1536 in Basel, and in French in 1541 and subsequently republished and expanded by the author several times. In the preface to the first edition, John Calvin appeals to the French king Francis I with a request to stop the persecution of Protestants at that time and to listen to them [7].

In his work, Calvin formed and substantiated the foundations of his soteriological doctrine, namely, he presented two fundamental concepts of the doctrine – "justification by faith" and "predestination to salvation". The idea of "justification by faith" is the main soteriology of Calvinism

and Lutheranism and rests on one of the *Quinque sola* (Five foundations of Protestant theology), namely *Sola fide* – justification by faith alone [8, p. 78]. According to this concept, a believer can be saved and receive God's grace only through his faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and God's mercy. Jean Calvin, during the formation of his interpretation of this soteriological idea, was in almost everything solidarity with the interpretation of Martin Luther, except for the aspect that, according to the Genevan reformer, God pre-selects both the justified and the sinners. That is, Calvin partially combines the concept of "justification by faith" with ideas about predestination and based on this he forms his own interpretation of the principle of *sola fide*.

Justification by faith is the main element of the Reformation concept of salvation. In general, historically, this concept has been considered by all Protestant currents to be the most important dogma of the Christian faith, but recently it has been relegated to the secondary level due to the spread of ecumenism. Humanity is limited in its ability to fully repent of its sins, or even in its ability to simply prepare for it because of its sinfulness. Therefore, reformist theologians conclude from this that the complete justification of a person is possible only with the direct and gracious help of God.

Sanctification is one of the components of the Christian concept of salvation, according to which God endows the believer with holiness, thus giving him the ability to show greater love both to God himself and to other people. In this case, the necessary consequence of the believer's salvation are the good deeds he performs to the extent of his sanctification, but this does not mean that the believer comes to salvation thanks to them. According to Reformed theologians, sanctification and justification are accomplished only by faith, because to do good works, it means to live like a person who has become a son of God.

The idea of "predestination unto salvation" is that God has foreordained everything, namely, chosen believers who will be saved in the future. Also, according to S. Golovashchenko, in "Instructions in the Christian Faith" the author considered old theological doctrines, which were based on the idea of "double predestination, and qualitatively developed" [9, p. 177]. The concept of "double predestination" is based on the principle that God has predestined not only those believers who will be saved by His grace, but also those who will be condemned to eternal damnation because of all their sins. That is, God is independent in his designs, everything is predetermined by him and is irreversible. In support of his doctrine, John Calvin often cited a passage from the Epistle to the Romans of the Apostle Paul: "For He says to Moses: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. Therefore, it depends neither on the one who wants, nor on the one who runs, but on God, who has mercy" (Rom. 9:15–16).

Some modern Calvinist theologians, in response to objections to the unethical nature of double predestination, give the following answer: the active implementation of predestination by God is performed only for the elect for salvation. In this case, God gives the grace that grants salvation only to the elect, and He denies this privilege to the damned. Reformed theologians believe that even in this case God remains fair and just by creating certain people whom He then curses, because although God blesses the elect with eternal life, He does not force the damned to live a life of sin. Also, theologians believe that the concept of "double predestination" cannot be relevant for those Protestant denominations whose adherents believe that God simply ignores and does not condemn the damned. In one of his works, Jean Calvin wrote as follows: „They do it incorrectly and somewhat childishly, because it is impossible for someone to be chosen without confronting the non-elect with condemnation... whom God bypasses, it means that he is wicked, and this is not for any reason, for what other reason than that He wants to exclude such people from the inheritance that He has determined for His children” [10].

The theological context of J. Calvin's soteriology is directly related to Christology. An important aspect of salvation is the awareness of Christ as true God and true man: "It is very important for us to understand that the One who was supposed to become the Mediator was a real God and a real man" [10]. Using the words of the Apostle Paul: "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), Calvin builds a Christological concept of the hypostatic union of the Divine and human nature in Jesus Christ, which he interprets soteriologically. This

approach is conditioned, first of all, for the believer's union with Christ, which, according to J. Calvin, leads to his justification. Second, through union, the believer is born again in the image of Christ. Therefore, the upward goal of the atonement was the union of the human and Divine natures, so that through the mortality of the former, man would be cleansed and freed from his sins, and by the power of the latter, death would be overcome.

In the soteriological aspect, the greatest attention should be paid to such parts of "Instructions in the Christian Faith" by Jean Calvin as Book Two "Knowledge of God the Savior in Christ, which was first revealed to our fathers in the Law, then to us in the Gospel" and Book Three "In what way do we get grace from Christ, and what are the consequences for us from this and what actions follow from this", the subject of which is clear from the titles. Thus, in Book Two, Chapter 6 "Depraved and fallen man must seek salvation in Christ", the Genevan reformer emphasizes that "the reception of the elect, the protection of the Church, salvation in danger – all this is connected with the grace of the Mediator, all hope bliss only in Christ". Also, in confirmation of the correctness of the doctrine of "justification by faith", Calvin cites the words of the Apostle John: "Eternal life is to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You sent" (John 17:3) [7, p. 48]. According to B. Herrish, defining even the partial corruption of human nature, J. Calvin tried to show the consequences of the fall, which overshadow all the good that was preserved in man [11, p. 219].

In the Third Book, the author continues the formation of his soteriological doctrine. Thus, in Chapter 3 "We are reborn by faith and repentance", he points out that the main content of the Gospel is repentance and forgiveness of sins, which Christ gave us and which we accept by faith [7, p. 83]. In Chapter 11, "Justification of Faith: First, a Description of the Word and the Deed", Calvin notes that justification is the most important pillar on which religion stands. The believer will be justified by faith, who is deprived of the righteousness of works and by faith grasps the righteousness from Christ. According to Calvin, faith is only a tool for receiving grace in Christ [7, p. 104–106]. In Chapter 21, "On the eternal election, by which God predestined some to bliss and others to destruction", the concept of "double before determination" is presented. Thus, the author writes that predestination, or appointment, is called "the eternal decree of God, which He decreed in Himself, which He wanted to happen to every person". Calvin notes that not all people were created equal: for some, God destined salvation and eternal life, and for others – sinfulness and eternal destruction" [7, p. 138].

Conclusions and prospects for further research.

Based on the analysis of the Christological predicates of Protestant theologians, we will name the general principles of teaching about the sacrament of the Eucharist. First of all, this is the concept of divine sovereignty, according to which complete submission to God was recognized and the possibility of man's salvation by his own efforts was denied. Therefore, the sacrament of the Eucharist in the interpretation of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin is a symbolic testimony of the life and death of Christ, which indicated the way to eternal life. Applying the spatial and semantic connection of bread and wine with the Body and Blood of Christ, Protestants placed the main content of consumption on faith, which attracted a person to union with Christ.

Thus, the central pillars of the soteriological doctrine of Calvinism, or Reformed theology, are the concepts of "justification by faith", "predestination unto salvation" and "double predestination". They were formed by John Calvin based on the contemporary soteriological ideas of Martin Luther and the works of the Church Fathers. The very first presentation of his soteriological doctrines by the Genevan reformer was carried out in the work "Instructions in the Christian Faith", which became a pillar for the formation of the theology of the Calvinist Protestant trend.

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