

a new Church, but rather for a continuing of the True Church by a clear call for a return, with re-emphasis and obedience, to the Words and commands of Christ and the entire Holy Scripture.¹⁰

These statements generally summarize Calvin's view of the Church. They could be expanded but would only amplify Calvin's clear view of the difference between a true Church and a false "Church" with the conclusion that there was not the slightest obligation to believers to continue that which was false. Calvin's stand for the Historic Christian Faith was firm and he urged all believers not to depart from this. The emphasis always was that a true Church was one faithful to the Word of Christ and the apostles and continued in the administration of the sacraments given by Jesus, and that any teaching other than that was unworthy of the support and assent of the Christian community. Examining the various writings of Calvin this central premise of his view of the Church is specifically emphasized.

The Institutes

The first writing of consideration must be the well-known Institutes. The Institutes comprise the greatest single piece of extra-Biblical, theological literature ever penned. They were written by Calvin to meet a specific need in his day and age, and yet are timeless in their expression of God's truth. The fourth volume deals particularly with the Church although there are other references to the Church