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PREPARATION

Section No	Beveridge	McNeill
1	The Holy Spirit the bond which unites us with Christ. This the result of faith produced by the secret operation of the Holy Spirit. This obvious from Scripture.	The Holy Spirit as the bond that unites us to Christ
2	In Christ the Mediator the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be seen in all their fullness. To what end. Why the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son.	How and why Christ was endowed with the Holy Spirit
3	Titles of the Spirit,—1. The Spirit of adoption. 2. An earnest and seal. 3. Water. 4. Life. 5. Oil and unction. 6. Fire. 7. A fountain. 8. The word of God. Use of these titles.	Titles of the Holy Spirit in Scripture
4	Faith being the special work of the Holy Spirit, the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit usually ascribed to it.	Faith as the work of the Spirit

Whom does the title of this chapter lead us to expect it to be about?

1. Review the section headings. What is Calvin's reason for introducing the Holy Spirit at this point? ('introducing' is not meant to imply that he has not referred to the Holy Spirit previously.)
2. What does this teach us about the subject of book 3?
3. Find out what you can about the role played by the issues covered in this chapter in the split between Catholicism and Orthodoxy.

EXPLORATORY

Section No	Beveridge	McNeill
1	The Holy Spirit the bond which unites us with Christ. This the result of faith produced by the secret operation of the Holy Spirit. This obvious from Scripture.	The Holy Spirit as the bond that unites us to Christ

As a result of his voluntary humiliation, his submission to death and his resurrection, Christ received benefits. For what purpose? (537, 3f)

- a. *...not for Christ's own private use, but that he might enrich poor and needy men*

What prevents Christ from enriching us with the benefits he has received? (537,

Viewed from our own individual perspectives what renders Christ's possession of these benefits valueless to us? (537, 4ff, 13f)

- a. *...we must understand that as long as Christ remains outside of us, and we are separated from him, all that he has suffered and done for the salvation of the human race remains useless and is of no value for us.*
- b. *...all that he possesses is nothing to us until we grow into one body with him.*

What titles of Christ does Calvin cite that demonstrate our need to be united to him (537, 9f)

- a. *...our Head*
- b. *...the first-born among many brethren*

What descriptions of us does he cite, to the same end? (537, 11f)

- a. *...engrafted into Christ*
- b. *...put on Christ*

Why does reason itself teach...us to climb higher and to examine into the secret energy of the Spirit, by which we come to enjoy Christ and all his benefits? (537, 15f)

- a. *...not all indiscriminately embrace that communion with Christ which is offered through the gospel.*

(On 538, 5ff Calvin refers to the double mention of the Spirit in 1 John 5:7-8. He sees this double mention as emphasizing the point he is making about the prominent role played by the Holy Spirit in making Christ our personal saviour. However, not all English versions contain both of these lists. This is due to manuscript variations and the history of how, *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one*, found its way into the manuscript of the New Testament compiled by Erasmus that eventually became known as the Received Text.

If textual matters are a particular interest of yours, there is a very full Wikipedia article on 1 John 5:7 [here.](#))

- a. *...the Holy Spirit is the bond by which Christ effectually unites us to himself.*

Section No	Beveridge	McNeill
2	In Christ the Mediator the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to be seen in all their fullness. To what end. Why the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son.	How and why Christ was endowed with the Holy Spirit

Why do you think Calvin says (538, 23f) *...Christ came endowed with the Holy Spirit in a special way*? What was special about the way Christ was endowed with the Holy Spirit, compared to the way that others who had also experienced the Spirit's working and indwelling had been endowed with him? (537, 2ff; 538, 23ff, 39ff; 539, 10f)

- a. *...those benefits which the Father bestowed upon his only begotten Son - not for Christ's own private use but that he might enrich poor and needy men.*

- b. *...Christ came endowed with the Holy Spirit in a special way: that is to separate us from the world and to gather us into the hope of the eternal inheritance.*
- c. *...God the Father...has bestowed the whole fulness of the Spirit upon the Son to be minister and steward of his liberality.*
- d. *...Christ, with whom were laid up the gifts of the Spirit to bestow upon his people.*

In this section Calvin distinguishes between two kinds of life. What names does he give them? (538, 28ff; 539, 20ff)

- a. *...a general power. And ...that natural life.*
- b. *...heavenly life. And, This unique life which the Son of God inspires in his own.*

What does Calvin associate with the, *general power*, and, *that natural life*?

- a. The general power *...is visible both in the human race and in the rest of the living creatures.* The natural life *...is common also to the wicked.*

What does he associate with the heavenly and unique lives? (538, 35, 38; 539, 21f)

- a. *...the gifts of the Spirit.*
- b. *...heavenly doctrine.*
- c. *...they become one with him.*

In view of these things, how do the prophets characterise the Kingdom of Christ? (538, 31f)

- a. *...the time when there will be a richer outpouring of the Spirit.*

What is the effect of this *richer outpouring*? (538, 37f)

- a. *...God will make disciples of those who were previously destitute and empty of the heavenly doctrine.*

How does Calvin in this section distinguish between the roles of the Father and of the Son in the sending of the Spirit? (539, 8ff)

- a. *...the Father...is the author...*
- b. *...Christ, with whom were laid up the gifts of the Spirit to bestow upon his people.*

In this paragraph, Calvin cites six passages in which the giving of the Spirit and the Spirit's work in believers is traced back variously to the Father and to the Son. In the first passage cited the same Holy Spirit is called, *the Spirit of God*, and, *the Spirit of Christ*.

Section No	Beveridge	McNeill
3	Titles of the Spirit,—1. The Spirit of adoption. 2. An earnest and seal. 3. Water. 4. Life. 5. Oil and unction. 6. Fire. 7. A fountain. 8. The word of God. Use of these titles.	Titles of the Holy Spirit in Scripture

Why is it useful *here...to note what titles are applied to the Holy Spirit*?

- a. Because each title relates to something that the Holy Spirit does by way of applying the work of Christ to our hearts?

Section No	Beveridge	McNeill
4	Faith being the special work of the Holy Spirit, the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit usually ascribed to it.	Faith as the work of the Spirit

In this section Calvin makes clear, repeatedly, that without the Holy Spirit nobody would possess that faith in Christ, by which a saving response to the gospel is made.

FOR REFLECTION

1. What mistake is made by Roman Catholicism in particular, but also by those who think like them, that would be corrected if they accepted the teaching of this chapter.
2. On at least two occasions in this chapter Calvin refers to Luke 16:3 in a way that indicates that he understands the reference to 'fire' in that verse as a reference to the Holy Spirit's purifying work (*...boiling away and burning up our vicious and inordinate desires, he enflames our hearts with the love of God...*)

Is that the only way in which 'fire' can be understood in this verse?

Which understanding do you think is correct, and why?