

EDITOR'S NOTES

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Those of us who are Presbyterian or Reformed and those of us who live in a free society owe a double debt to God and to one of his servants, John Calvin. God deserves all the glory and all our thanks for these blessings; Calvin himself would insist on that. It is ironic that we celebrate Calvin's 500th birthday. He himself shunned glory, instructing that he be buried in an unmarked grave, which was simply marked "J.C." But we do honor Calvin—one of God's greatest gifts to the church. God used Calvin largely to codify the Reformed faith and to initiate in Europe the movement toward limited, representative government, with economic and political freedom.

This will be the first of two issues of the *WRS Journal* featuring John Calvin. In this first issue we bring you a survey of his life, in three parts, written by Ron Vandermey, Laurie Copeland, and Jerry Gardner. Then Ben Dally offers a brief definition of Calvinism, and Ed Oliver defends Calvin and Calvinism against its many detractors. Calvin's impact on the church and society has been huge. As far as the church is concerned, Keith Coleman tells of his great influence for the cause of missions, and John Dyck spells out his impact on public worship. Other articles on Calvin's impact are scheduled to appear in the second issue. Concluding this issue is an unusual article by Doug Bond, veteran tour guide of Reformation sites—an arm-chair tourist's guide to follow the life of Calvin.

While we desire to honor Calvin on this great occasion, we must remember that the best way to honor Calvin is to praise and honor God. In Calvin's eyes God is truly great, the sovereign King, Creator and Redeemer. May this issue of the *WRS Journal* help us all better to see God as he truly is. That would be a birthday gift to Calvin that he would approve of.