

John Calvin  
*Truth for All Time: A Brief Outline of the Christian Faith*,  
trans. Stuart Olyott  
(Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1998);  
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*Truth for All Time* is a translation of John Calvin's *Brève instruction chrétienne*, his *Brief Outline of the Christian Faith*. Stuart Olyott relates the history of this work in his introduction to the translation, which he did himself. Written in the winter of 1536-1537 to nurture those who had joyfully discovered biblical Christianity, the work was soon superseded by Calvin's 1542 catechism. But Olyott is right to stress that the work is "a precious jewel" (p.vii), for in it we have "the very core of Protestant belief and feel the warmth of its ardent love for God and man" (p.ix).

The work follows the order of the first edition of the *Institutes*, covering knowledge of God and humanity, the law, faith, prayer, the sacraments, and the relationship of church and state. It really is an excellent introduction to Christianity.

The section on faith, for example, covers, in a brief compass, such things as election, predestination, the nature of genuine faith and its fruits, repentance, and the new birth, as well as the affirmations of the *Apostles' Creed*. The section on prayer is equally rich and an excellent guide to one of the most important spiritual disciplines. It is noteworthy that in the final 1559 edition of the *Institutes* the largest section is on prayer. The section on prayer in this *brief Outline* is an antepast of that larger discussion.

The Banner of Truth Trust is to be commended for publishing this fine work.

Michael A. G. Haykin