

For **GENEVA**, theology is not a puzzle to solve but a landscape to explore. She sees beauty where others see rules! Geneva helps the group see that divine truth is not only weighty but alive, shimmering with the warmth of God's own presence.



THEO is always thoughtful—lingering over questions long after others have moved on. He aches not just to know *about* God but to truly know him. His honesty draws the group deeper. Through Theo's searching, they learn that the Spirit meets even the questioning heart.



John Calvin's Illustrated

INSTITUTES

The Word of God

Book 1: Chapters 6-9

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CONTENTS

Introduction: From the Seed of Religion
to the Light of Scripture 6

6. Scripture Is Necessary for a True Knowledge of God 13

7. The Witness of the Spirit to the Authority of Scripture 37

8. Evidence That Supports the Bible's Authority 55

9. Word and Spirit Belong Together 72

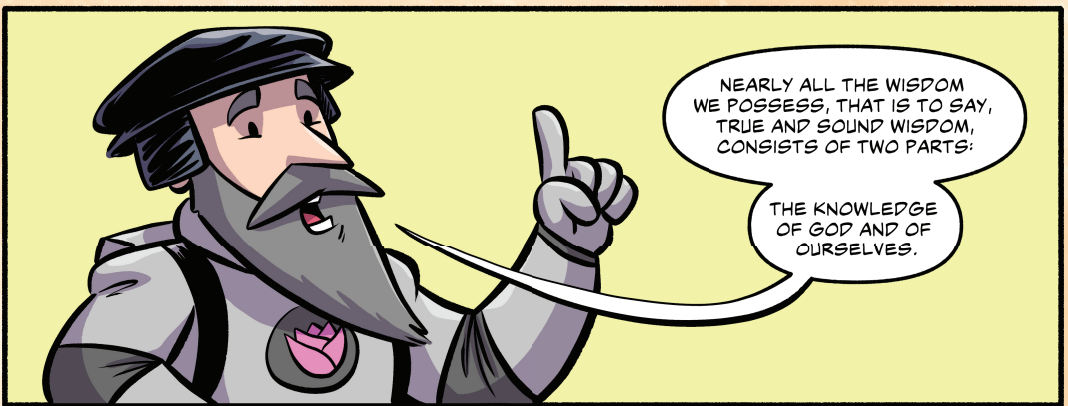
INTRODUCTION

FROM THE SEED OF RELIGION TO THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

Hey everyone! As we turn the page in our illustrated journey through Calvin's *Institutes*, let's pause to remember the foundational truths we learned in the first issue, *Knowing God and Knowing Ourselves*. I can't wait to see what we'll discover next!

LOOKING BACK

In Book 1, Chapters 1–5, Calvin tackled some pretty massive questions: Who is God? Who are we? And how can we actually know the answers? Here's what blew my mind—Calvin said that real wisdom isn't about cramming your head with facts. It's about understanding two things that are completely connected: knowing God and knowing yourself.

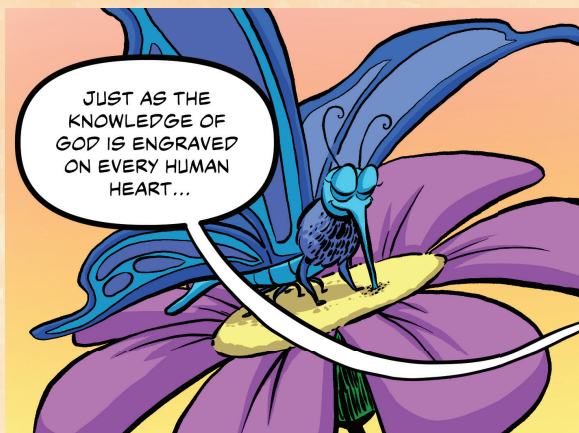


But here's the catch: You can't really understand yourself without knowing God first. It's like trying to see your reflection in a dirty mirror. Only when you hold yourself up against God's perfect character do you suddenly see all your flaws and realize how much you need him.

Calvin also taught us something fascinating—every single person has what he called a “seed of religion” planted deep inside them. It’s like God’s signature on every human heart. That’s why people everywhere, no matter how isolated, have some sense that God exists somewhere out there.



God shows us who he is through everything he’s made. That incredible sunset last night? All those tiny details in a single leaf? The stars you can see on a clear night? They’re all pointing to God’s power and creativity. Paul talks about this in Romans 1:20—how creation itself shows us God’s nature so clearly that we can’t miss it. As Calvin observes,





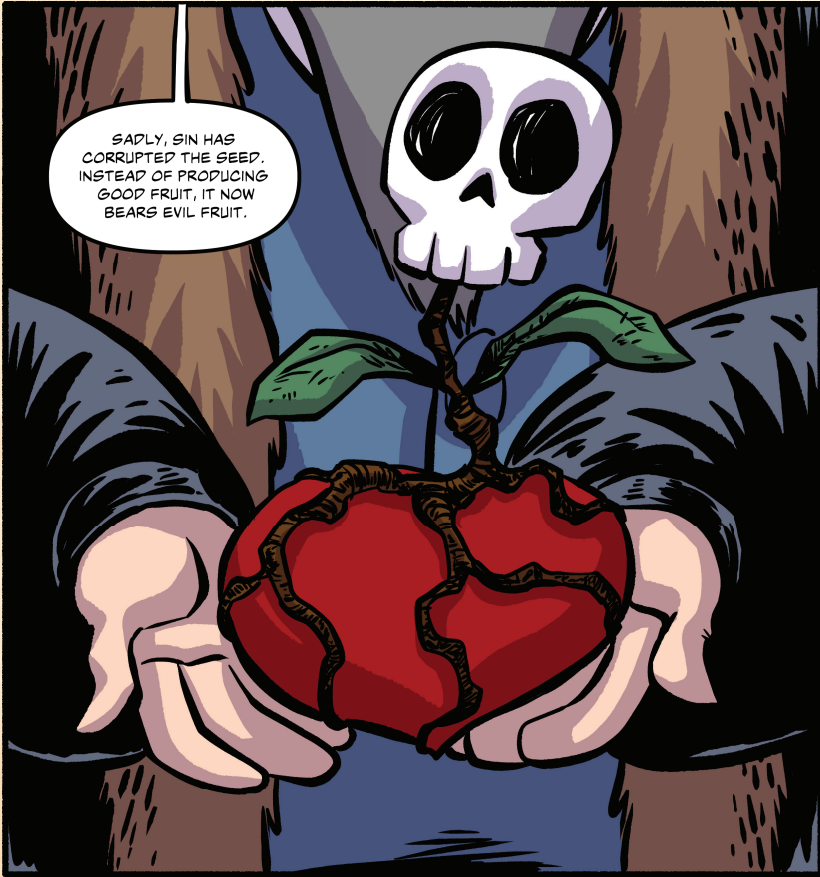
...SO THE UNMISTAKABLE MARKS OF HIS GLORY ARE ENGRAVED UPON ALL CREATION.

WHEREVER WE LOOK, THERE IS NO PART OF THIS WORLD—NO MATTER HOW SMALL—WHERE WE DON'T SEE AT LEAST SOME SPARKLE OF GOD'S GLORY.

WE CANNOT GAZE UPON THIS BREATHTAKING MASTERPIECE OF CREATION WITHOUT BEING COMPLETELY DAZZLED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF GOD'S MAJESTY.



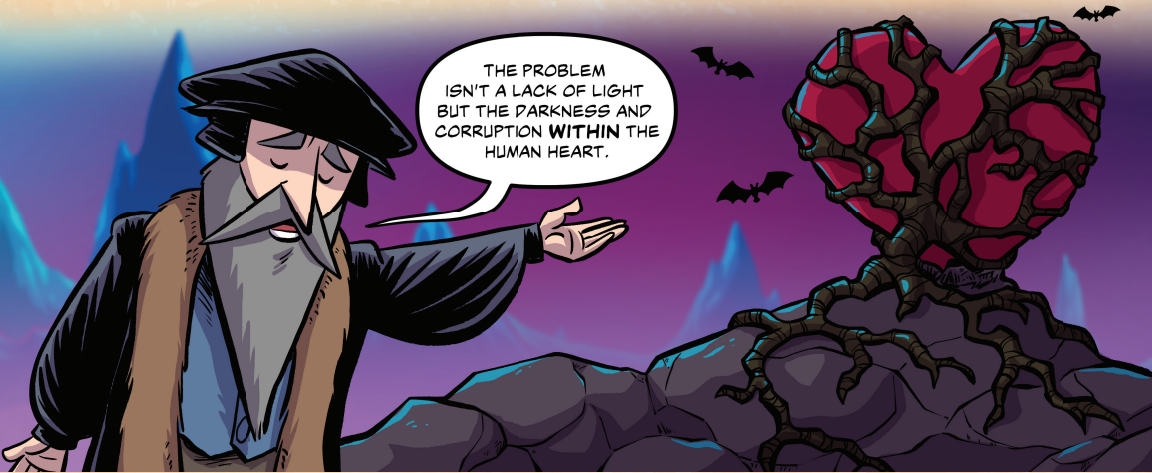
But there's a problem. Sin has messed everything up.



Even though God's fingerprints are everywhere, people either ignore them or make up their own ideas about what God is like.

WHY CREATION ISN'T ENOUGH

So . . . if God left such obvious clues everywhere, why do people still miss him? Calvin's answer is brutal but honest: The problem isn't God's evidence—it's us.



Sin has blinded us to spiritual things. We see proof of them, but we don't get what it means.



That's why creation, despite constantly pointing to God, can't give us the clear, life-changing knowledge of who God really is and what he wants from us. If we go only by what we see in nature or feel in our hearts, we end up with a blurry, confusing picture of God.

SCRIPTURE CHANGES EVERYTHING

This is where our adventure gets really exciting! In this issue, Calvin will show us how God reveals himself most clearly—through his Word, the Bible.

Think about it like this: God revealed his power through creation, but then he gave us something even better so we could actually know him personally. Imagine squinting at everything because you can't see clearly. Then you put on glasses, and everything suddenly comes into focus. The Bible is our pair of glasses.

Creation is amazing, but it's like a teacher who can only point at things without explaining them. In the Bible, God actually speaks directly to us, telling us his name, his promises, and his plan to rescue us.

Are you ready to dive into Scripture with Calvin and discover the most incredible treasure of all—truly knowing God through his Word?

Let's do this!



CHAPTER 6

**Scripture Is Necessary for a
True Knowledge of God**









GOD HAS REVEALED HIS MAJESTY TO ALL THROUGH THE WONDERS OF CREATION...



...BUT HE HAS GIVEN US SOMETHING EVEN GREATER SO WE CAN TRULY KNOW HIM:



THE BIBLE.



NOW, PICTURE THEM PUTTING ON A PAIR OF GLASSES.



IN THE SAME WAY, SCRIPTURE HELPS US SEE CLEARLY SO THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE TRUE NATURE OF GOD.



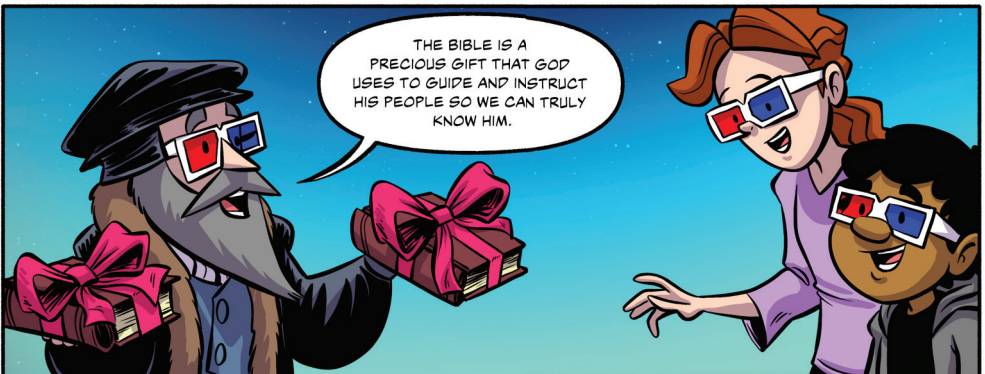
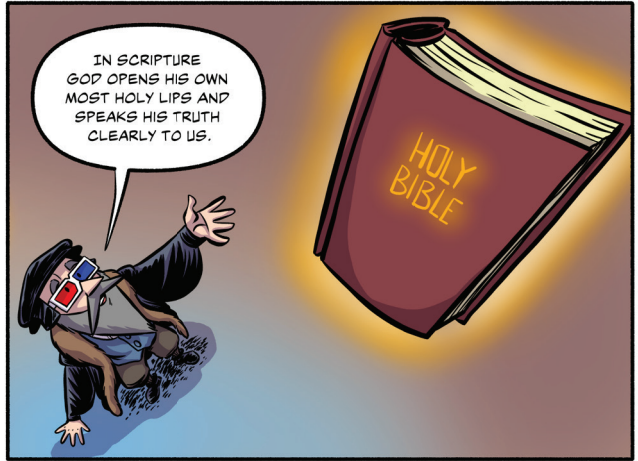
CREATION IS LIKE A MUTE TEACHER—POINTING TO GOD'S GLORY, BUT UNABLE TO EXPLAIN IT CLEARLY.



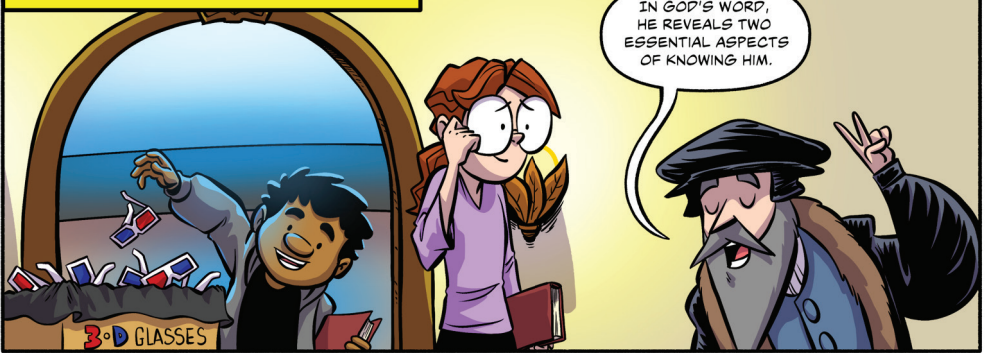
YES,
"THE HEAVENS
DECLARE THE
GLORY OF GOD"
(PSALM 19:1),
BUT THEY
ARE LIKE A BOOK
WE CAN SEE BUT
NOT READ.

CREATION

HOLY BIBLE



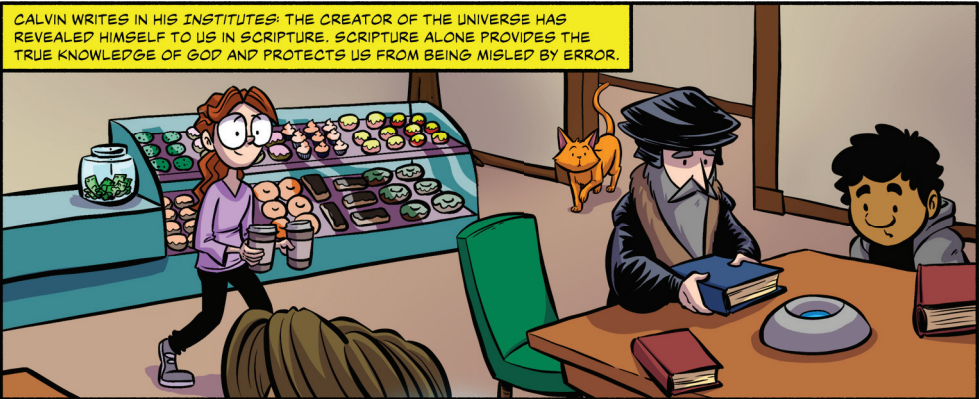
WE MUST KNOW GOD IN TWO MAIN WAYS:
AS OUR CREATOR AND OUR REDEEMER.



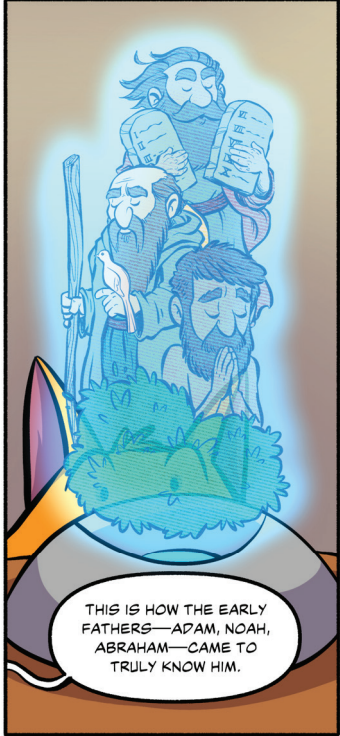
THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS FOUND ONLY IN SCRIPTURE.



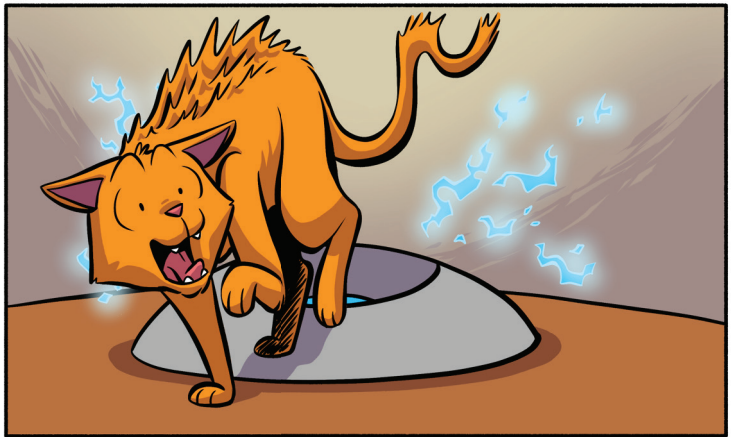
CALVIN WRITES IN HIS INSTITUTES: THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE HAS REVEALED HIMSELF TO US IN SCRIPTURE. SCRIPTURE ALONE PROVIDES THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND PROTECTS US FROM BEING MISLED BY ERROR.

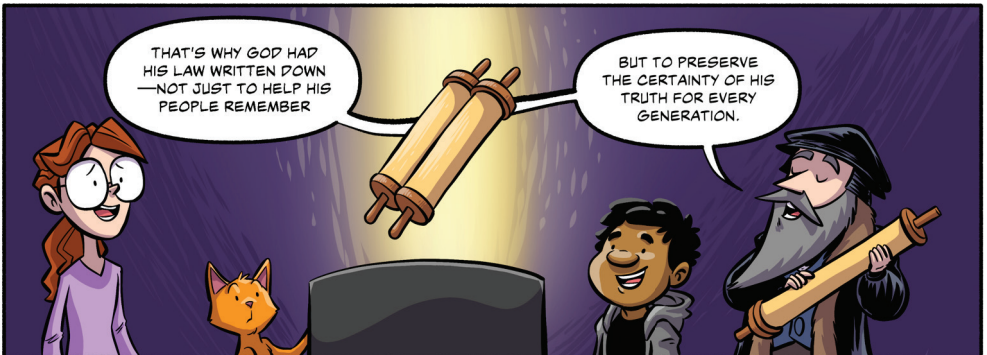
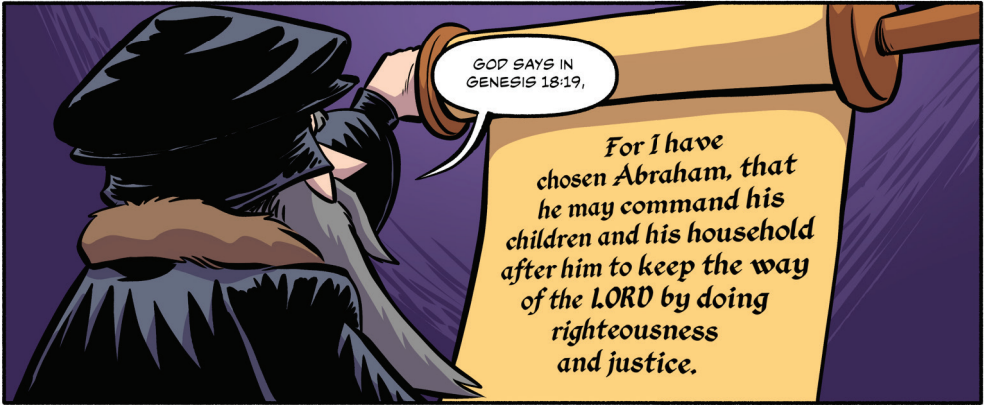
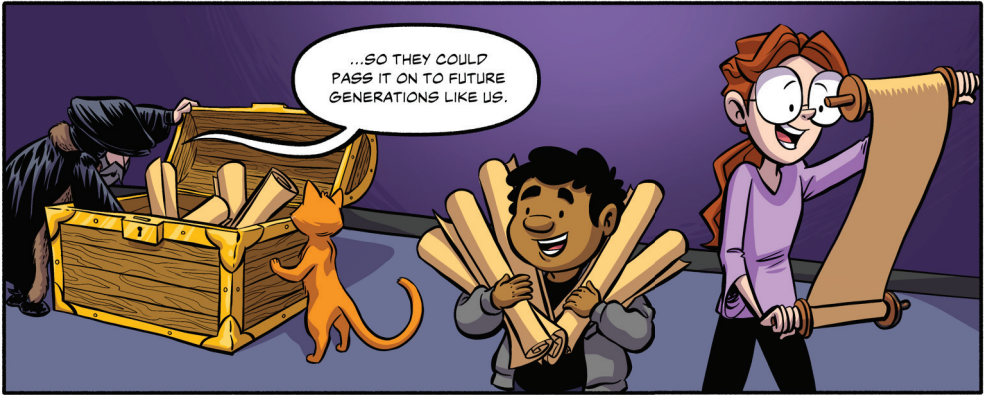


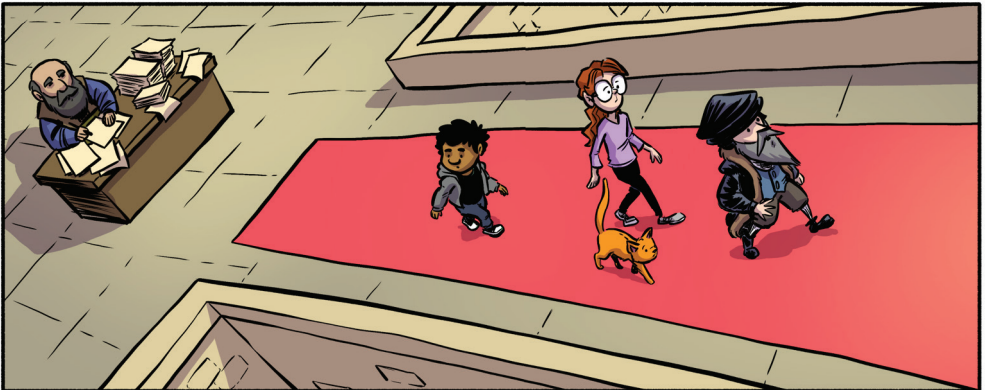
LONG AGO, BEFORE GOD'S WORD WAS WRITTEN DOWN, HE REVEALED HIMSELF THROUGH VISIONS AND DIRECT MESSAGES.



THIS IS HOW THE EARLY FATHERS—ADAM, NOAH, ABRAHAM—CAME TO TRULY KNOW HIM.









ABSOLUTELY!

THE BIBLE IS A PRECIOUS TREASURE.

IT PRESERVES GOD'S TRUTH FOR EVERY GENERATION, SO WE CAN KNOW AND FOLLOW HIM.

WOW!

TRULY THE BIBLE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST TREASURES THAT GOD HAS EVER GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE!







"THE BLESSED AND ONLY SOVEREIGN, THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, WHO ALONE HAS IMMORTALITY, WHO DWELLS IN UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT, WHOM NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN OR CAN SEE."

(1 TIMOTHY 6:15-16)

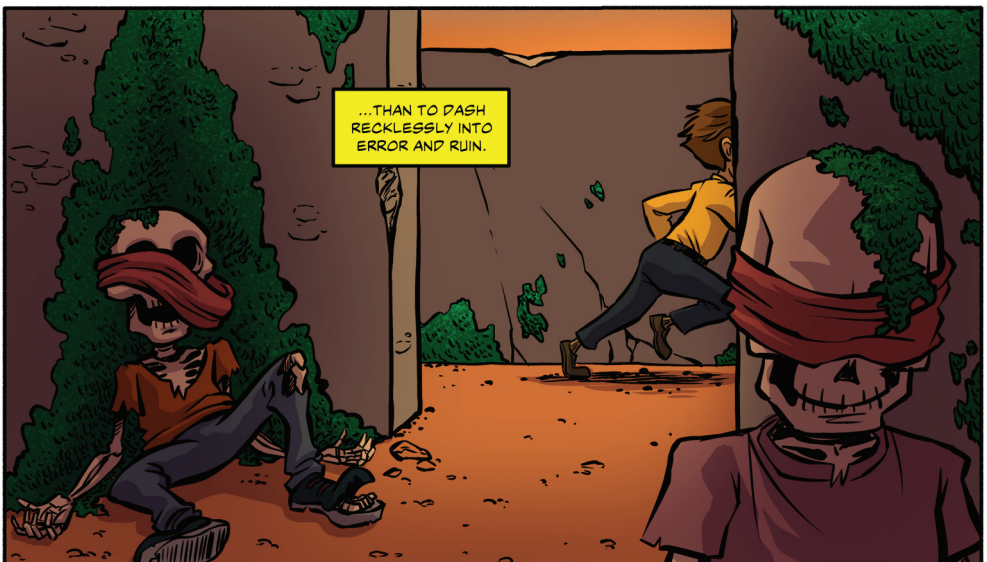
IF GOD IS UNAPPROACHABLE, DOES THAT MEAN WE CAN'T COME TO HIM AT ALL?

WE CANNOT APPROACH GOD ON OUR OWN. HE MUST REVEAL HIMSELF TO US THROUGH HIS WORD BEFORE WE CAN KNOW HIM AND DRAW NEAR TO HIM.

THE MAJESTY AND SPLENDOR OF GOD ARE LIKE AN INCOMPREHENSIBLE MAZE IN WHICH WE WILL EASILY GET LOST...



...UNLESS WE ARE
GUIDED THROUGH IT
BY THE THREAD OF
GOD'S WORD.





THE WEEDS OF ERROR CAN NEVER BE UPROOTED FROM HUMAN HEARTS...



...UNTIL THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS PLANTED THERE.



HOW IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD PLANTED IN THE HUMAN HEART?



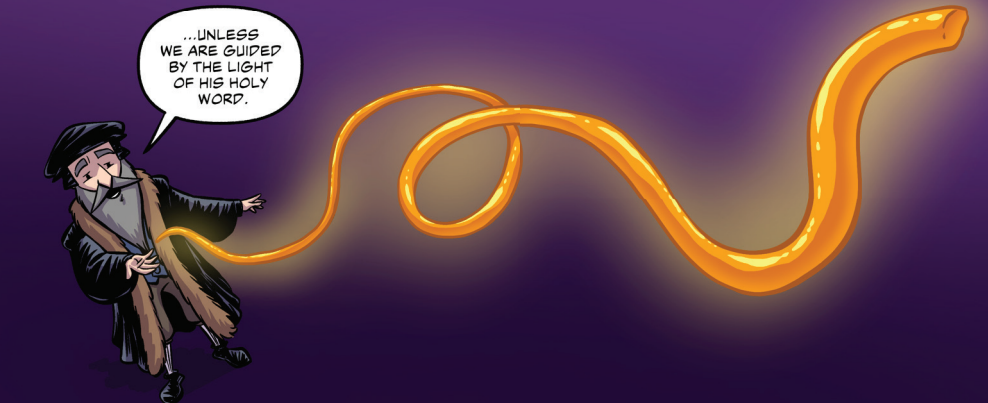
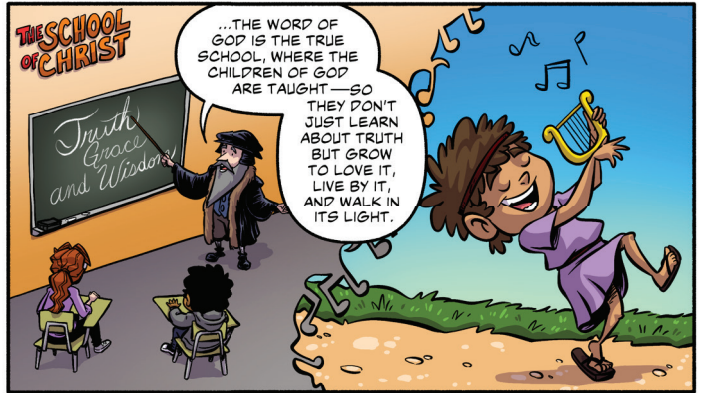
IT IS PLANTED IN OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE READING OF GOD'S WORD.

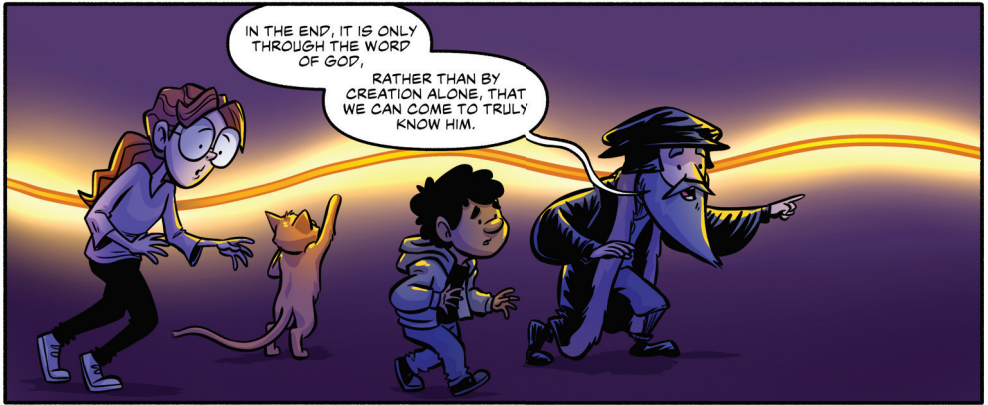


"THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD, AND THE SKY ABOVE PROCLAIMS HIS HANDIWORK.

DAY TO DAY POURS OUT SPEECH, AND NIGHT TO NIGHT REVEALS KNOWLEDGE." (PSALM 19:1-2)

HOWEVER, EVEN THE MAJESTIC HEAVENS FALL SHORT OF FULLY REVEALING ALL THE RICHNESS OF GOD'S TRUTH.





CHAPTER SUMMARY

Not only has God revealed his majesty to all through the wonders of creation, but he has given us the Bible. While creation displays aspects of God's power and beauty, the Bible reveals God's true nature and teaches us what we need to know about him. It is only through the Word of God, rather than by creation alone, that we can come to truly know him.

God has revealed through his Word that he is the Creator of the universe and the Redeemer of his people. The Bible is a precious treasure that preserves God's saving truth across generations, enabling us to know and follow him. Scripture is like spectacles that help us see clearly, a golden thread that guides us in the true knowledge of God, and a good school where we grow in the light of God's truth.

Due to human sinfulness and frailty, we cannot truly know God without the aid of Scripture. The Word of God is the bedrock of true faith and right understanding of God. Without it, we are prone to wander into error. As we read his Word, the knowledge of God takes root in our hearts, drawing us closer to him and leading us into a true understanding of who he is.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND MEDITATION

1. Can creation tell us everything we need to know about God? What is it able to tell us? What can't it tell us?
2. Why does Calvin compare the Bible to a pair of glasses? Why do we need the glasses of Scripture?



3. Why is it important for us to have God’s Word written down in a book?
4. According to Calvin, what two essential aspects of God does Scripture reveal, and why is it important for us to grasp these aspects to truly understand who God is?
5. The Bible is a precious gift from God. Imagine if you didn’t have the Bible—how would your understanding of God and the Christian life change without it?
6. Why does Calvin emphasize the importance of revering and diligently studying Scripture? How should we approach Scripture in order to gain a true knowledge of God?
7. What happens when people do not listen to or follow God’s Word? What dangers arise from ignoring or distorting it?
8. Why does Calvin compare God to a maze we can’t solve? How does the Bible help us find our way to knowing God better?
9. How does the Bible reveal God’s truth and draw us closer to him? How can we ensure we follow its teachings in our daily lives?
10. How can the teachings of the Bible guide us when we want to make decisions in our daily lives?

READ CALVIN FOR YOURSELF!
BOOK 1, CHAPTER 6, SECTIONS 1-4