

## **We belong to God not to ourselves**

“We are not our own: let not reason nor our will, therefore, sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own; let us therefore not set it as our goal to see what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: insofar as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours. Conversely, we are God’s: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God’s: let his wisdom and will, therefore, rule all our actions. We are God’s: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal. O, how much has that man profited who, having been taught that he is not his own, has taken away dominion and rule from his own reason that he may yield it to God! For, as consulting our self-interest is the pestilence that most effectively leads to our destruction, so the sole haven of salvation is to be wise in nothing and to will nothing through ourselves but to follow the leading of the Lord alone.

”Let this therefore be the first step, that a man depart from himself in order that he may apply the whole force of his ability in the service of the Lord.”

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, III.vii.1