



Divine Accommodation in John Calvin's Theology: Analysis and Assessment (Reformed Historical Theology)

Arnold Huijgen

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Arnold Huijgen analyzes and evaluates the concept of divine accommodation in the theology of John Calvin. Accommodation means that God adapts His revelation in the human comprehension. Calvin's terminology of the concept of divine accommodation was likely influenced by Erasmus, while its content themes were dominated by the theology of the church fathers. The author argues that Calvin's concept of divine accommodation can be described within two aspects: education and revelation. The educational aspect lies in Calvin's understanding of the history of salvation and the relationship between the Old and New Testament. Christ as the mediator has a central role in this aspect. The disclosure aspect refers to Calvin's understanding of the nature of God, which he often describes as lying behind God's revelation. Calvin's definition of revelation as accommodation implies a certain dynamism of the disclosure. Based on this analysis, Huijgen evaluates Calvin's concept of divine accommodation theologically in a comparison with the modern critique of this concept by I.A. Dorner, H.M. Kuitert, and K. Barth. The author concludes that the concept of divine accommodation must be criticized on many points, but that most of the pedagogical aspects can be made fruitful for the present-day.

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